

From: [Cameron Stallings](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Tayley Stallings](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:07:58 PM

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I am writing to express my opposition against HB130 specifically entailing the mandatory 5 day week. My children attend Texico Elementary which implements a 4 day educational week the majority of the year. They have only been in attendance there for one semester after attending a larger public school in our local town of Clovis. Since attending a 4 day week school they have excelled in all aspects of their education and extracurricular activities. The numbers on the report cards don't lie. They are happier, better mannered, and better educated. Naturally I cannot attribute this all to the fact that they switched from a 5 to a 4 day educational week. My point being is what Texico Schools is doing is working well and has been for decades. Leave the decision up to the educators and the school board as whether or not a child needs more days in school.

Thank you,

Cameron Stallings

From: [Gabrielle Villavicencio](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atf.union.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:26:30 PM

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Hello,

I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the proposed school calendar change. This change does not allow for professional development time, nor time for parent teacher conferences. This would, in essence, lengthen the school year or lengthen the work day if teachers were to be able to continue to have these essential non-teaching hours. Neither of these are satisfactory options for students or teachers.

There is insufficient data to justify a longer school year after having upheaved the calendar only a year ago to accommodate HB 130. New Mexico already suffers from an epidemic of truancy. Why does the PED expect these students to come to school when they would traditionally be off for summer break?

If there is not a longer school year, then teachers would have to work longer days in order to attend professional development and schedule parent teacher conferences outside of the school day. With major problems filling teacher vacancies, it does not make sense for the PED to mandate teachers work longer hours in order to attend professional development and to do what is necessary for their students to succeed.

If this proposal were to pass and the PED mandate 180 days per school year, what would that say about what New Mexico values in education? Do we value following best practices and finding the root causes of problems in order to help our students learn and stay in school? Or do we value mindless "solutions" that simply put a greater burden on the educators who have the greatest impact on their students' development and learning?

The PED needs to take action in order to improve New Mexico schools. This proposed rule would not improve our schools, and will harm New Mexico students. The PED needs to re-evaluate how it goes about creating solutions, and think about starting with the people who are doing the hard work of actually educating students.

Respectfully,



From: [Greg Sheahan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school week
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:28:38 PM

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The requirement for a 5 day school week will be detrimental to the students in rural areas. A majority of our student ride a bus for an hour to and from school every day. Adding an additional day will not help student achievement. The additional expense for transportation and utilities will have to be raised somewhere. The Friday's off, allows Doctors appointments and sports events to be scheduled around school and students do not lose instructional time. Quemado High School has achieved a 98% 4 year graduation rate and our schools rank in the top 20% in reading, math and science proficiency. There is no reason to change the students attendance schedule.

State law 22-2-8.1 focuses on instructional hours, not days.
Law 22-8-23.14 authorizes both 4 day and 5 day weeks.
Departmental regulations CANNOT override statutory authorization.

No to a 5 day school week rule
Sincerely
Greg & Pattie Sheahan
Quemado New Mexico

From: [Christina Esterly](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed 180 instructional days for all students rule
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:30:25 PM

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As parent's a dual-credit, hardworking Junior, we voice our opinion that we do not agree with this proposal of 180 instructional days for all students. The summer is already short enough with school starting so early now in August and these kids need some breaks. Please count my vote and my husband's as against this rule.

Thank you,

Christina E

From: [Stan Lyons](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RULES OF 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:00:56 PM

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Dear NMPED Officials and Other Supporters of Proposed Rule 6.10.5,

I am a community member, a retired educator, in Deming, NM. I do not support this proposed rule for the following reasons:

1. Six years ago, Deming Cesar Chavez Charter High School shifted from a 5 day school week to 4 day school week. Student attendance increased significantly due to this change.
2. Most of the 12th graders and 11th graders at DCCCHS work on Fridays, developing employment skills in the community of Deming. It should be noted that DCCCHS serves the High Risk students of Luna County, and most students NEED to earn money due to their financial circumstances, as many do not live with their families.
3. The 4 day school week helps to reduce overall stress on our students, and many of the DCCCHS students have complained of their anxiety when they attended the larger Deming High School.
4. The 4 day school week fits the DCCCHS culture and blends well with parent needs, as expressed over the 6+ years by an overwhelming number of parents.
5. DCCCHS followed the process of initiating a 4 day school week. The 4 day week contributed to increased attendance, and increased numbers of high school graduates. Stripping the school of this highly beneficial element can appear capricious, and will have an adverse impact on student and staff morale as well. I do not believe that members of the PED or the governor's staff, or anyone else working in Education in Santa Fe is capricious.

In summary, we all understand that test scores in NM are far below where we want them to be. But in no way can one attribute NM low test scores to 4 day school weeks. The 4 day school week serves the communities that have adopted and utilize this schedule, so please do not adopt this rule.

Thank you,
Stan Lyons,
Retired Teacher-Principal

From: [Laura Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 6:30:44 PM

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I am writing you in opposition to the rule changes for HB130. Stop arbitrarily adding days to our school year. Students, families, and educators need stability and constantly messing with the school calendar is disruptive to our whole students, families and their whole lives, and educator livelihoods. It is unfair to our families and our educators to not have a consistent, stable education and working calendars. Local education agencies need the ability and authority to make decisions that are best for their communities - one size fits all is never a solution in education.

Until the state of NM can figure out an actual school attendance plan, continuing to add school days will have no effect on student outcomes. So it has been said that student outcomes don't change until adult actions do - continuing to add more school days is not a change in adult actions. What meaningful actions has the PED taken to reduce student absenteeism beyond repeatedly sending out worthless emails to families? Where are the truancy laws? Where is the funding of more community school coordinators and social workers? Where is PED in the support of relationships with our schools and communities to come up with real solutions to reduce absenteeism?

We do not need more instructional hours; we need more collaboration hours, professional development hours, more families involvement hours, more planning and prep time hours, more training hours, and more community outreach hours.

Do not allow PED to usurp the authority of the state legislature- the rule was written as designed with the input of all stakeholders and was fully debated and vetted in the last legislative session. Honor the law as written and voted on by the representatives of the people.

Thank you,
Laura Williams

From: [Jena Blomquist](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); gail@gailfornewmexico.com; crystal.daimond@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No 5 day School Weeks!
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 7:11:47 PM

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Hello,

The 4 day school week has been great for families who prioritize family above all things.

I know that for us, having Fridays off has helped me and my kids take trips and vacations that would have been counted as absences from school otherwise.

The 5 day school week has shown, according to my research, exactly zero improvements to grades, especially compared to results generally seen from the 4 day week (which are better). All this will do is put more absences on student records.

For years I have made sure to keep my Fridays open for my kids and I to have special time together, whether that is just a whole day to ourselves or a three day weekend trip.

No 5 day school weeks!

Thank you!

Jenny Blomquist

Address:
177 Hop Canyon Rd,
Magdalena, New Mexico,
87825
Phone Number:
575 740 5655

From: [Lindsey McClain](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:01:45 PM

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Afternoon PED,

I do not want or agree with changing to 5 day school week!!! We are like a lot of small rural towns in New Mexico, our students often have to wake up by 4 am to get ready to meet the bus, sleep on the ride (often 30-45 min both ways). When the kids gets home it's homework dinner chores bed. Friday's are my days with my children!!!!!! We spent that time together as a family!!! Our teachers are amazing!!! Even after a pandemic our kids are thriving, learning, and proving that the our staff has gone above and beyond that the children do not lack in their education!! School is not a babysitter , kids learn just as much at home outside of the school then they do in the school room! Do not take my time with them away!!!

Thank you for your time

Lindsey McClain

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lindsey McClain](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:01:48 PM

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Afternoon PED,

I do not want or agree with changing to 5 day school week!!! We are like a lot of small rural towns in New Mexico, our students often have to wake up by 4 am to get ready to meet the bus, sleep on the ride (often 30-45 min both ways). When the kids gets home it's homework dinner chores bed. Friday's are my days with my children!!!!!! We spent that time together as a family!!! Our teachers are amazing!!! Even after a pandemic our kids are thriving, learning, and proving that the our staff has gone above and beyond that the children do not lack in their education!! School is not a babysitter , kids learn just as much at home outside of the school then they do in the school room! Do not take my time with them away!!!

Thank you for your time

Lindsey McClain

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Hope Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4day workweek
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:04:56 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

In our rural community, we absolutely love the four day work week. Please do not take it away from us. Thank you

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From: [Lindsay](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130 - TISA
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:37:21 PM

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Hello,

I am Lindsay Walkowski a parent at Taos Integrated School of the Arts (TISA). I would like to voice the importance of allowing our public charter schools to adhere to simply meeting 1,140 hour requirements stated in the statute. The proposed changes would remove the ability for small schools to continue with the fulltime 4-day per week schedule.

This would remove TISA's ability to offer free aftercare to our families. Further creating hardships for our families.

Here are some facts about four day school weeks. It helps attract and retain quality teachers, reduce overhead costs of building operation, maintenance and food service. Twenty five other states are practicing 4 day weeks. TISA currently is a four day a week school that was recognized as a Spotlight school performing in the top 15% of the state for the last three years.

Compacting school into just four days a week leaves more time with family, friends and outside interests and it increases school attendance. TISA was one of the top schools with school attendance last year. We consistently have over 95% attendance.

My child loves having a four day school week and she is thriving with her current school schedule. We beg you to hear our voices and see our commitment to our children's education and help us keep our four day school weeks.

Thank you for you time,
Lindsay Walkowski

From: [Matthew Fesko](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please keep school hours at 1,140 - do not change rule
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:39:22 PM

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Good evening,

Please keep the school hours at 1,140 and do not change the rule. Please do not change the rule to 180 days. I am in strong favor of the 4 day school week as it allows me to work a 4 day week in Los Alamos and bring my earnings back to Taos.

thank you,

Matt Fesko

From: [Teresa Sandoval](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Propose Rule Change on 180 instructional days
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:03:01 PM

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The proposal to add more days of instruction, without addressing the important issues of attendance and schools where bus drivers are double routing and specials of music, library, computer, P.E., etc. are no longer available is absolutely out of touch with the needs of our students. I believe that rural schools need more issues/concerns met before adding more days of less opportunities. Schools that perform on a four-day week are not necessarily at the bottom like it said in the reason for the proposal. Schools that are making gains coming out of being sent home for time during Covid shouldn't be punished they are on their way to success.

Making a blanket proposal is the same as delivering instruction without differentiation to the content. One size does not fit all. Is that not what we believe when teaching students? We deliver instruction that meets the needs of all students not just a select group. This proposal does not differentiate for the smaller rural schools that will be more impacted by this decision.

I ask that the PED actually visit each and every school before moving forward. I suggest getting a calendar of all schools and the PD dates and attend one at each school (not just the district) to hear first hand from the very individuals that work every day without resources and/or teach students with differentiation and have students who aren't in school miss out on the delivery of instruction.

From: [Ember True](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 5:56:12 AM

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Hello,

I am a parent in the Taos school community whose child goes to TISA. We really benefit from the 4 day school week because it provides more family time, makes it easier to have good attendance, and makes it possible for the school to give free after school care. Please vote against HB130. It is not good for our community!

Thank you,
Ember True

From: [Will or Delrae Ward](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Sumpter, Kodi](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns about the proposed changes to school operations
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:13:14 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 writing to express my concerns about the proposed changes the PED has set out in draft 6.10.5. Although I appreciate the concern and guidance that elected officials and in turn appointed officials have for my children's education I believe that decisions about my family and my community are best made locally by people who more in touch with the local community. This proposed change would drastically change the lives of most of rural New Mexico. The four day school week and the hybrid week using remote learning has been employed by every small school in the state. These schools are among some of the most successful in the state. The communities are dedicated to the success of their students and the local school boards are where the decisions about how the school years are organized, and how the staff and students can best be accommodated are best left in local control. Changing the school year to remove remote learning, teacher development and four day school weeks would be a mistake that would greatly impact the rural communities in New Mexico for the negative. Please don't change things just to change them especially since these small, rural school are some of the most successful in the state.

yours respectfully,

Will Ward
parent Des Moines Municipal Schools

From: [Laura Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Change
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:58:31 AM

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Good morning,

Actually, that is hard for me to say today. I came into school early to get things done and learned something that was disheartening. I learned about the proposed rule change to HB 130. It made me feel frustrated and confused.

I would like to know why the PED is trying to make teachers' work even harder than it is. With the passing of HB 130 we are already overstressed. Our schedule is a mess, there is no consistency to days on or off, there are ten more Wednesdays than Fridays which makes service schedules very hard for us to build in the special ed department of our school, parents don't understand the calendar so they take days off whenever they feel like it and attendance is no longer a priority, but worst of all is the lack of collaboration time.

The new law killed collaboration time at our school. Each grade level team used to collaborate at our school for 90 minutes per week. This year, we collaborate for an hour once per month.

As a fourth-year teacher, I am currently enrolled in the MLSS micro-credential. I can't count the number of times that the importance of collaboration was discussed in the different modules. Collaboration is the heart of MLSS. Without that collaboration time, there are no teams of teachers working for the children. We lost that collaboration time. Any time outside of the one PD day per month that we are given is squeezed in while we are trying to eat lunch or after school on our own time. By changing the rule so that even less time is allowed for parent-teacher conferences, professional development, and collaboration we are hurting the children. We are not giving teachers the necessary time to collaborate. Without that time built into the day, collaboration cannot happen.

Morale among teachers this year is at an all-time low. This morning, my morale is right with them. PED needs to support their own directives and allow time for collaboration. That time needs to be funded so that teachers are not trying to squeeze in discussions while passing in the halls or trying to eat lunch.

Please do not make the rule change.

Sincerely,
Laura Smith

From: [Ashley White](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:03:27 AM

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

I am writing to object to the proposed changes in 6.10.5. Decisions should be left in the hands of the schools and communities regarding school scheduling. Cloudcroft schools currently enjoy a 4 day school week and abide by the required hours. This allows kids more time with family as they should have and staff with a more flexible schedule as well. More and more families are choosing to homeschool due to the overreach of governing bodies and this is yet another example of that.

Thank you,
Ashley White
Cloudcroft, NM

From: [Stephanie Madrid](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NM Proposal Mandate for Public Schools
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:08:44 AM

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Good morning. I am a mother to 3 children attending school in Clovis, NM. To say that our school system is completely upside down is an understatement!! Since Covid occurred I have watched the access of great education decline. My children have not gone 1 year with a solid foundation due to the shortage of educators. "Permanent Subs" seem to be the new norm, and these children are suffering!!! These children can't learn when they have a new face in their classroom every other day. Adding more days to a calendar that is already hard to get through seems like the state wants to run ahead of the horse instead of saddling up. You have to fix what is broken before you can add on to the broken list! We cannot afford to lose more teachers. If a proposal like this were to move forward our children and OUR future will suffer tremendously! These teachers need more from the state, they need to be heard! They are the ones day in and day out fighting to make it another day. It is sad to see how badly the schools are trying to recruit parents to become employed with them. It has been difficult to adapt to someone that has ZERO education in educating sitting behind a desk to teach our children. I stand for my children and my community when I say that this proposal will completely destroy the present and future of education! Please take the time to step back and view the true issue. I hope this email is read and taken with the utmost seriousness, our future truly depends on it!

Sincerely,
Mrs.Madrid

From: [A Felix](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nmac 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:17:20 AM

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

Please vote NO to this proposal. Adding more days will not help students or teachers. We need smaller class sizes, more full time specialists and nurses, and less emphasis on number of days in school. We already have a teachers shortage. We don't have enough substitutes. Say no to more days. Thank you

A Felix, MS
N.B.C.T.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Trent LaCompte](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:27:48 AM

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In rural areas, the four-day school week is crucial to the education of many individuals. Myself and many of my peers experience long commutes. These can add up to more than three hours a day spent in a car and bus. A five-day week would only exasperate this commuting issue and be detrimental towards attendance. Many have expressed thoughts of switching to online school or simply attending less if such a change would occur. Furthermore, a myriad of studies demonstrate the benefits of a four-day week. Hours spent in school would remain the same, but a five-day week would only serve to heavily inconvenience those not living near the school.

Trent LaCompte

From: drbratcher@eyecarenm.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:46:38 AM

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NMPED

I am writing to express my unwavering support for maintaining the current 4-day school week at Cliff School. As a longstanding member of the Cliff community, I have witnessed the positive impact this schedule has had on our students, teachers, and the overall academic atmosphere for the past two decades.

The decision to adopt a 4-day school week at Cliff School was not arbitrary; rather, it was based on careful consideration of our unique community needs and a commitment to providing an effective and enriching education for our students. Over the years, this schedule has proven to be successful, as evidenced by our testing scores consistently being on par with or even surpassing those of our 5-day counterparts.

One of the key advantages of the 4-day school week is the extended instructional time on each school day. With longer class periods, teachers have the opportunity to delve deeper into subjects, engage students in meaningful discussions, and foster a more profound understanding of the curriculum. This extended time allows for more interactive and hands-on learning experiences, contributing significantly to our students' academic success.

Moreover, the 4-day school week has facilitated increased attendance rates among both students and faculty. By condensing the school week, we have seen a reduction in absenteeism and an improvement in overall morale. Teachers and students alike appreciate the extra day for rest and recuperation, leading to increased focus and productivity during the school days.

Furthermore, the 4-day schedule has allowed for valuable extracurricular activities, such as field trips, community service projects, and enrichment programs, which play a crucial role in the holistic development of our students. These experiences contribute to a well-rounded education that extends beyond traditional classroom learning.

In light of these considerations, I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to carefully weigh the proven benefits of the 4-day school week at Cliff School when evaluating the proposed calendar changes. The unique success of our current schedule is a testament to the thoughtful decision-making that has shaped our educational practices over the years.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that the New Mexico Public Education Department will recognize the merit of maintaining the 4-day school week at Cliff School

and continue to support our commitment to providing a high-quality education for our students.

Dr. Bratcher

Jason Bratcher, OD
Mountain View Eyecare
611 N. Hudson St.
Silver City , NM 88061
www.EyeCareNM.com



From: [Marin Goza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] "6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:52:18 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

I'm writing in regards to the proposal to eliminate the four-day school week in New Mexico. As a veteran teacher who has worked in both urban and rural areas, with both five- and four-day weeks, I strongly advocate for the continued support of the four-day week.

I have been working in a rural four-day district for the past nine years. I spent the previous ten years in larger five-day districts. I can wholeheartedly say that I have made a larger impact in the four-day district. Although I have fewer days per week with my students, our days are longer. With the smaller class sizes in our rural district, I have far more one-on-one instructional time with students than I did in the five-day districts, resulting in more significant learning growth. Additionally, I am able to spend my Fridays attending professional development, providing meaningful feedback on student work, and devising rigorous and dynamic lesson plans that meet my student needs. I am more enthusiastic and energetic in my teaching because I have time to focus on my own professional growth.

Sparsely populated rural districts have a difficult time staffing their schools with qualified teachers. The four-day week provides an incentive to nearby teachers and helps provide quality instruction to rural students. Forcing a five-day week would potentially drive teachers out of rural districts.

The four-day week makes sense for our rural district. We are able to schedule extra-curricular events on Fridays, resulting in fewer absences. Four days also helps our district save money on busing, utilities, and wages for hourly employees. Many of our older students work on Fridays to help support their families. In short, our district knows what is best for this community, and it is a four-day week.

Our school is already meeting the state requirements for instructional hours; changing hours to days will not provide our students with more instruction. It will only upset our community and drive our teachers away. Please reconsider your decision to eliminate the four-day school week.

Marin Goza
Hondo Valley Public Schools

From: [tonja.cates](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 nmac school calendar
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:52:52 AM

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To who it may concern,

So I am a single mom/parent in the Cobre School District. I am providing my feedback regarding the added days that will require us to go back to a 5 day school week. As a parent that is in a district with the 4 days. It works great for us! Both of my kids are thriving in school! One even jumped a grade because she was doing so well in reading and all the other subjects. We are also struggling to get teachers in this area and the 4 day work week is appealing to get them. We are a small town, so we have to travel to Las Cruces for appointments a lot. And having that Friday that they are NOT in school helps to make the 1 1/2 hr drive each way to go to them without it being an absent is very important to me! The 4 days is working for us! We as a district should be able to do what works for us! You guys make changes up there but don't look at the scores for us that it will impact the most! We should have a say in what we want! Cliff schools is also a great example of the 4 day working great for 20 years! This change to go back to 5 days will be very hard on the students as well as the parents. Attendance will be a lot worse if there is no day for parents to get their appointments done!

Thank you

Thanks,
Tonja

From: [Kim Nance](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); gail@gailfornewmexico.com; crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed change to HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:05:52 AM

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I am a concerned parent of two students who attend Magdalena School. Just like Socorro, Magdalena has a 4 day school week. My kids ride the bus for over an hour to and from school each day. We are a ranching family and need their help on the three day weekends attending to our cattle. The extra day also makes it easier to get my kids to doctor and dentist appointments without missing any school since Socorro and Albuquerque are both over an hour away from where we live.

Changing our school to a five day school week would add to transportation costs and increase my kids time on a bus to 12 hours a week. Their instructional time would be the same, because their four day week meets the hourly requirement by the state. Finding staff and teachers to work at the school would be more difficult as many of them also have ranches to help with on weekends.

Please do not vote for the proposed change. It would cause a lot of hardships in rural communities!

K. Nance

From: [Dollie O'Neill](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:20:31 AM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dollie O'Neill** <doneill@cimarronschools.org>
Date: Fri, Dec 1, 2023 at 10:52 AM
Subject: School Calendar Requirements
To: <Rule.Feedback@ped.nm.gov>

Dear NM Dept of Education,

Our community is appalled of how this mandate of 180 days is being handled in our state. I represent our District as a School Board Member for Cimarron Municipal Schools.

1-Cimarron Municipal School District currently operates on a 4-day school week as we have since 1972 as the first 4-Day school district in New Mexico. This decision was made for several reasons. First, attendance of both staff and students is essential. Absences directly impact student achievement. When staff or students have to go to a doctor or dentist appointment, it is not just a quick trip. This requires traveling to another town to seek care and includes significant driving time. Often, a full day is missed for a single appointment, particularly if a specialist is required. Currently, our staff and families try to schedule all appointments on Mondays so as not to miss school. If we move to a 5-day week, it is no longer possible to both attend school and take care of medical needs. Additionally, we limited substitute teacher availability for the entire district as well as limited bus drivers.

2-Approximately 90% of our middle and high school students are involved in either athletics or activities which require travel to competitions. Due to our location in the state, we often have to travel significant distances for games and tournaments. If we move to a 5 day week sporting events will almost always take place on a school day/night which affects attendance when we travel far distances for games.

3-Cimarron is a rural community. The three villages encompassed within our district have long standing cultural and employment traditions that would be greatly impacted by moving to a 5 day week. The 4-day school week is a way for families to still prioritize education but also have the full family available 3 days a week to keep their family traditions intact. Even some of our staff work a second job on Mondays and the weekend. Our staff prefer to work the 4-day week. This is one thing Cimarron School District has been able to capitalize on when recruiting staff to our very small, rural district. As the teacher shortage grows, it is more and more difficult to hire highly qualified teachers.

4-If PED requires schools to move to a 5-day week, many staff who are currently eligible to retire will take that option, creating an even bigger teacher shortage. In an informal poll of staff, those eligible to retire would definitely consider this option.

5- Currently, our middle and high school students have 7 classes per day that are each an hour long. If we move to a calendar with 180 days, we will have to shorten the length of our day. Where do we cut that time? Do we eliminate an elective class for our middle and high school students? Or do we cut the class periods back to only 45 minutes each? In elementary, the students have set time length requirements for reading blocks, math blocks, literacy blocks, etc. What do we cut for them?

6-Finally, opening school for a fifth day each week costs money. When you consider all expenses required to operate a school including transportation, food service, staff, utilities, supplies, etc, it costs approximately \$52,682 per day for Cimarron School District to be open. In order to increase our calendar to 180 school days for students, we would have to add 31 instructional days for students. Staff contracts would have to increase by 37 days since professional work hours are no longer included in that minimum instructional time. If we do the math, it would cost Cimarron School District an additional \$1.6 million to implement this new PED rule. And, PED is NOT increasing our funding. Because these requirements are being implemented by rule and not by law, there is no appropriation tied to it. I truly do not know where we would cut our budget to find the \$1.6 million.

7-Is the state of New Mexico prepared to provide this cost of \$1.6 million to enable for our School District to shift on this change?

8-Is the State of NM prepared to fund \$200-\$300 million to fund all the schools with this 180 day shift per year in perpetuity?

9-What thorough research has been done to even consider the huge impact this would have on all Districts in the State?

10-There are other ways to address concerns such as Teacher Shortages and chronic absentee issues of students, why is this 180 school mandate the main anchor to solve these issues?

11- What is the waiver option for 4 day school schedules? Where do we find this information?

Respectfully,

Dollie O'Neill

Parent of Cimarron School Students

From: [Jacob Ankrum](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:21:10 AM

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Good Morning,

I am writing to you to speak against the proposed changes to the school calendar and for the constant changes regarding our working environment.

As an educator, I am expected to establish consistency, offer support to my colleagues and students, and have sound, logical reasoning behind my choices inside and outside the classroom. I am expected to maintain these standards while the legislature and other governing bodies are allowed to make arbitrary decisions that drastically alter my working conditions and schedule. There is already a teacher burnout problem in the state and nationwide, resulting in a teacher shortage. If you are intending to simultaneously cause educators to leave the profession and turn away potential teachers before they enter the workforce, this is a great option to achieve that goal.

Please do not implement these changes mandating that these instructional hours must be in the classroom and not include the professional development and family engagement that is required of us. This will only make our student absence problem and our teacher shortage worse. Please listen to the ones that are experiencing these issues and the ones that would be affected by these changes directly.

Best,

Jacob Ankrum
11th Grade English
Albuquerque High School

From: [Donna Armijo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:28:58 AM
Attachments: [HB 130 letter to NMPED.png](#)

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To whom it May Concern,

I am writing in regards to the HB 130 proposal that will change the current 4-day school week. I am a parent of a child who attends school in Magdalena, NM, which is currently on the 4-day week schedule. This schedule really works for our family as we drive from a town 30 miles away. The additional trips on Friday's would be a financial burden on my household. That would be an additional 120 miles per week. More importantly, the Socorro Municipal Schools are on a 4-day schedule as well. This allows for them to have project based Fridays for extracurricular activities. My husband and I currently run an extracurricular class that is an auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. We currently have 15 students involved in our program. We are volunteers and provide this program to the students at no cost. We offer Leadership training, Emergency Services training, Pilot training, Drone training, Military Customs and Courtesies, Drill, Color/Honor guard, Aerospace and more. Our Aerospace portion of the program would cease to exist if we go back to the 5-day week as our teacher for Aerospace is also a science teacher for the high school. He would have no time to teach this curriculum to our cadets. Also, we would have to move our meeting times to evenings, which would interfere with our cadets that are involved in sports. It would also interfere with homework and family time. We have been running this program for over 5 years now, in our experience running this program, we have found that our Friday classes work out the best and we have the most participation compared to having them in the evenings. I can also attest to the fact that there are other project based classes being held at Socorro High School on Fridays as well, such as the Welding Program and Auto. On average, they have approximately 30 students between the two classes every friday. A lot of these students are trying to obtain their certification and advance their education and training in certain areas. Something they can not do during a normal 5-day school week. If the NM Public Education Department requires the school to go back to the 5-day school schedule, it will negatively impact a lot of students, and these are not your average students, these are kids who have motivation and drive. They are not required to attend these classes, but rather, they choose to come be a part of something that will better their futures. Your decisions as a governing agency affect the lives of many people, especially the lives and future of our children. Please leave the 4-day school week.

Sincerely,
Donna Armijo

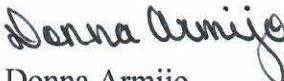
Postscript: Attached is this letter in a word format containing my signature.

To whom it May Concern,

06 DEC 23

I am writing in regards to the HB 130 proposal that will change the current 4-day school week. I am a parent of a child who attends school in Magdalena, NM, which is currently on the 4-day week schedule. This schedule really works for our family as we drive from a town 30 miles away. The additional trips on Friday's would be a financial burden on my household. That would be an additional 120 miles per week. More importantly, the Socorro Municipal Schools are on a 4-day schedule as well. This allows for them to have project-based Fridays for extracurricular activities. My husband and I currently run an extracurricular class that is an auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. We currently have 15 students involved in our program. We are volunteers and provide this program to the students at no cost. We offer Leadership training, Emergency Services training, Pilot training, Drone training, Military Customs and Courtesies, Drill, Color/Honor guard, Aerospace and more. Our Aerospace portion of the program would cease to exist if we go back to the 5-day week as our teacher for Aerospace is also a science teacher for the high school. He would have no time to teach this curriculum to our cadets. Also, we would have to move our meeting times to evenings, which would interfere with our cadets that are involved in sports. It would also interfere with homework and family time. We have been running this program for over 5 years now, in our experience running this program, we have found that our Friday classes work out the best and we have the most participation compared to having them in the evenings. I can also attest to the fact that there are other project based classes being held at Socorro High School on Fridays as well, such as the Welding Program and Auto. On average, they have approximately 30 students between the two classes every Friday. A lot of these students are trying to obtain their certification and advance their education and training in certain areas. Something they cannot do during a normal 5-day school week. If the NM Public Education Department requires the school to go back to the 5-day school schedule, it will negatively impact a lot of students, and these are not your average students, these are kids who have motivation and drive. They are not required to attend these classes, but rather, they choose to come be a part of something that will better their futures. Your decisions as a governing agency affect the lives of many people, especially the lives and future of our children. Please leave the 4-day school week.

Sincerely,


Donna Armijo

From: [Tammy Davis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:34:54 AM

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The proposed rule change 6.10.5 pertaining to school instructional time requirements

I am writing in opposition to the proposed rule change. Schools operate under the Public School Code that specifies a number of instructional hours. Each district has the authority and the ability to determine how those hours are scheduled, with many rural districts opting for a four-day week. In our district, our rural school that works on a four-day is currently, and consistently, a school of excellence. Their scores are among the very best in our state. Any attempt to interfere with their current scheduling is obviously not in an effort to increase student learning, but an attempt to usurp the authority of the local district. The rule also erodes the district's ability to provide professional development to teachers and staffs. In order to meet the mandate of 180 instructional days excluding PD, PD days must be sacrificed, or additional compensation must be given. In our district an additional school day costs approximately \$240,000. Without additional funding specifically to pay teachers for additional days for professional development, PD will be another victim of this rule. While touting the importance of research, consider the research on the effect of good professional development on student learning. But we are considering a rule to make that PD less likely to happen. Not only does this rule have legal problems, it is not in the best interest of student learning! I urge you to reconsider this rule change!

Tammy Davis
Artesia Public Schools

From: [Angela Stuart](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC feedback
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:49:05 AM

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In regards to **Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC**, I am against this. Local districts need the flexibility to create and fix their calendars to local events and culturally relevant holidays.

As for the new minimum number of school days, I would request that you view the laws of Montana or North Dakota. They are able to have higher testing scores with fewer educational minutes or days. Stop adding days, instead hold families accountable for the attendance of their students.

--

Angela Stuart
5th Grade Alcalde Elementary School
Espanola School District

From: [Pete Emery](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Haven, Glenn](#); gail@gailfornewmexico.com; crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NM HB130 feedback
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:56:11 AM

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

Dear Sirs,

I would like to offer my opposition to the proposed HB130 which plans a statewide shift to a 5-day school week. The four most mentioned reasons, all of them excellent in their own right, for keeping a 4-day school week for those districts that have them are as follows:

- 1) 4-day schools consistently perform higher on standardized testing than 5-day schools.
- 2) 4-day schools are able to use the 5th day for extra curricular activities without interrupting class time.

As a bus driver for Magdalena Schools, this often enables my route driving not to conflict with activity trips.

- 3) Transportation costs will be detrimentally impacted with 5-day school weeks; more miles, fuel, wear and tear on equipment

As a route driver in a rural district, I have some kids that are on the bus two hours a day, one hour each way. My first "pick up" kids need to be at the stop at 6:27am, and get dropped back off about 5:18pm or so.

- 4) Staff retention in rural districts is much easier with a 4-day school week, especially when a significant portion of staff live out of town for lack of local housing.

I would like to add some personal views to the aforementioned reasons for keeping a 4-day school week. I have noticed a few behavioral trends with my bus kids, and as I transport kids from pre-k to 12th grade, these behaviors seem consistent across all grades. Mondays, they're usually a bit subdued, but generally happy to see each other again and ready to start their week. Tuesdays are fairly rowdy in the afternoons, a good squabble day. Wednesdays, they're starting to get pooped, quite often sleeping on the way home. Thursdays, energy is back, everybody looking forward to their weekend. Early this school year, our village was without electrical power for a solid week due to lightning hitting our substation. School was canceled for the week. To make the class time up, we added a few 5-day school weeks, and the drop in student energy level was quite profound, not only towards the end of the 5-day school week, but even more markedly on the following 4-day week. I believe the loss of a third recuperation/renergization day off was to blame for the declining student energy level.

Also of personal note, Magdalena Schools has not been overwhelmed with multitudes of bus driver candidates, straining at the bit to get started. They're simply not out there. After a 43 year 40-65hr/wk work schedule in my previous profession, I retired to Magdalena. A little bit bored, and wanting to contribute to my community, and hearing of the need, I started driving a bus for Magdalena Schools, and the 4-day school week feels just right, still leaves me time for my various avocations. I can well imagine a 5-day school week would seem like too much of a full time job, and I'd have to make some serious decisions on how much free time to give up. Surely there are various other semi retired staff members in other 4-day school week districts that may be confronted with the same personal decisions.

Thank you for providing a forum for public comment.

Sincerely,
Peter H Emery
Magdalena Schools bus driver

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From: [PALLAS NATIONS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:02:05 AM

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Increasing the number of instructional days for students in New Mexico is not a solution to the lack of growth we see in our students.

We teachers are the only ones held accountable in the education process. I am a 4th grade teacher and I can say that until students are held accountable for their own learning instead of the teacher, students and parents will continue to be apathetic about education. Fix that first.

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From: [PALLAS NATIONS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Title 6 Chapter 10 Part 5 Instructional days
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:06:58 AM

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Increasing the number of instructional days for students in New Mexico is not a solution to the lack of growth we see in our students.

We teachers are the only ones held accountable in the education process. I am a 4th grade teacher and I can say that until students are held accountable for their own learning instead of the teacher, students and parents will continue to be apathetic about education. Fix that first.

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From: [Michaela Francis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns Regarding the Implementation of a 5-Day School Week
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:20:17 AM

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To whom it may concern;

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposal to transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day school week. While I understand that changes are sometimes necessary, I do not agree with this change. Our school has an impressive comparison of academics, sports, and well-being to that of a 5-day school week. The negatives that would come along with it highly outweigh any benefit.

I am a current staff member at Capitan Elementary School and have two children who attend Capitan Municipal Schools. Firstly, a 5-day school week could lead to increased stress and burnout among students. The additional day may result in longer hours spent on academic and extracurricular activities, leaving students with limited time for rest and relaxation. Research consistently shows that a healthy work-life balance is essential for optimal academic performance and overall well-being. Implementing a 5-day school week without adequate consideration for this balance may inadvertently harm the very individuals the education system aims to support.

Furthermore, the longer school week may also place a heavier burden on educators. Teaching is an already demanding profession, and adding an extra day to the workweek could lead to fatigue and decreased job satisfaction. This, in turn, may impact the quality of instruction and the overall learning experience for students.

In addition, there are potential logistical challenges associated with a 5-day school week, such as increased transportation costs, cafeteria costs, and scheduling conflicts. Families may also face difficulties in coordinating after-school activities and childcare arrangements on the newly introduced day.

Before deciding on such a significant change, I would urge the Public Education Department to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the potential benefits and drawbacks associated with increased classroom time. It is essential to involve input from various stakeholders, including students, parents, and teachers, to ensure that the decision is well-informed and takes into account the diverse needs of the school community.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and hope that careful consideration will be given to the potential implications of transitioning to a 5-day school week.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Michaela Francis, Parent/Educational Assistant/Full-Time Student

From: [Xekius Ramos](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:26:44 AM

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I am a Sophomore at Jal High School and I am against the HB130 that will change our four day week back to five days because It would just make my life so much harder having school on Fridays. I have doctor appointments scheduled for me on Fridays and my parents make plans around me on those days. I have my weekly checkup on Fridays. I've used my Fridays to go visit family and I've used it to go to my tias funeral and it's better because I won't have to miss school and be behind on my work if I have Fridays off.

From: [Christina Reynolds](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO to proposed amendments to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:35:49 AM

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Dear whom it concerns,

I am writing about the NMPED proposed changes for New Mexico schools. The 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirements being proposed are ridiculous. They will cost the schools more money just so that we can add one day to each week for what purpose? This will cause schools to lose more money on overhead costs such as electricity to be open an extra day, money that can be better utilized on student services, enrichment and updated curriculum. The schools that are currently serving students in 4-day weeks provide the hours needed, meeting requirements. This also acts as an incentive for teachers and school staff to work a four day work week and have three days off to plan and spend time with family. As a school employee I hope you reconsider and leave the 6.10.5 NMAC laws as is, requiring mandated school hours, not days.

--

Christina Reynolds

From: [Mrs. Shafer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:40:02 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 writing to voice my concerns about taking away the local choice in having a 4 day school week. As a teacher who currently teaches at a 4 day school district, I have seen firsthand the benefits of this school schedule. Student achievement is growing in our district and has moved from a traditional school to a spotlight school. The additional days are not the answer to improving student achievement. This is proven by the success many four-day districts have had.

The choice should be up to the districts who know their students best. Each student and school is unique and just as we differentiate instruction for students in class, we should have the choice to do what is best for our students when it comes to school schedules and days.

The four-day schedule allows for students to participate in extracurricular activities without missing school instruction. This limits the amount of absences that our schools have. Studies have shown that when students are in school, they are more likely to improve academically. An additional day of school will only increase those absences and it will be harder for students to catch up on the content.

Our environment is also an issue. Being a rural district, our students come to school from many miles away. Increasing the number of school days will increase the amount of diesel fuel being used on our buses immensely, which in turn will increase costs. Our schools already suffer from minimal funds, this will only increase that.

The statistics and data show that the change is not necessary and is simply an overreach of power. Taking away decision-making authority from local districts is a mistake in which rural communities would be the ones suffering.

thanks,

Sarah Shafer
5th Grade
Capitan Elementary School

From: [Kendra Angell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:43:50 AM

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

Good Morning,

I am writing to you today to discuss revoking the 4 day school week which benefits so many students for so many different reasons! I would like to share a few of our reasons for being so thankful for the 4 day school week!

My husband and I pride ourselves in the way we raise our children. We are 5th generation cattle ranchers in New Mexico and are working hard to pass down that lifestyle to our children. We are very fortunate to live in a very rural area of our county and attend a school that has a four day a week schedule. This greatly benefits our family. Our Fridays (which is our day off from school) allows our children to be involved in the daily operations of our cattle ranch. By doing this our children are learning far more than the classroom can provide them. Work ethic as well as responsibility is something that we work hard to instill in our boys.

On typical school days my children are up around 5:30 to tend to things that need attention around the ranch before the bus picks them up at 6:45. They return home around 4:45 in the afternoon and then do their chores. These are long days for them but you will not hear them complaining because they are aware that because of these long days they have their Friday to look forward to. Friday's for my kids are work days. They are not relaxing days. Our deep roots in agriculture are something that we are proud of and excited to share with our children! If our four day weeks are stripped from us it will leave us to homeschool our children!! We love our school district and are so grateful for them! We would hate to lose that connection with our community but 5 days a week of school is not conducive to our lifestyle!

Thank you for your time!

Kendra Angell
Angell Companies
575-399-1742

From: [Christina Reynolds](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO to proposed amendments to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:53:41 AM

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

Dear whom it concerns,

I am writing in concern regarding the NMPED proposed changes for New Mexico schools. The 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirements being proposed are ridiculous. They will cost the schools more money just so that we can add one day to each week for what purpose? This will cause schools to lose more money on overhead costs such as electricity to be open an extra day, money that can be better utilized on student services, enrichment and updated curriculum. The schools that are currently serving students in 4-day weeks provide the hours needed, meeting requirements. This is an effective incentive for teachers and all school employees to work a four day work week. Our rural schools are in need of incentives to keep teachers in our schools.

I love having three days to spend away from school with my child and enjoy family time. The 4 day week allows me to schedule appointments for my son on off days so he misses less school days. Absenteeism will likely increase if the schools are required to add days.

As a parent of an elementary student I hope you reconsider and leave the 6.10.5 NMAC laws as is, requiring mandated school hours, NOT DAYS!

Christina Reynolds,
Concerned Parent

From: [Darrell Chenault](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirement
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:56:16 AM

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

To Whom It May Concern,

First let me tell you a little about myself. Prior to becoming a school teacher I was a New Mexico State Police Officer for 10 years from 1984 until 1994. I thoroughly enjoyed my years with the department, but did observe a huge burn-out problem with the demanding work load and stress. Many of today's police departments as well as fire and EMS departments have modified their schedules to work a 4 day week. I understand that they take on more hours a day to do this, but that is not the point I want you to see. The 3 day break is giving them a better chance to reboot their mental system as well as spending greatly needed time with family. I'm absolutely not comparing police officer stress to teacher stress, but I do see the huge benefits of the extra day off for their health well being.

Today, I come to you as a teacher/coach for the last 23 years. All of this time has been under a 4 day school week. I do come from a small rural school district. The smaller classes sizes is a HUGE benefit as I have taught classes with 20 plus students as well as class sizes as small as 6. The optimum size in my humble opinion is around 14 students per class. The special part I see to this benefit is I get to keep many of my IEP students in class and can do more 1 on 1 with them. With this being said, I again in my humble opinion believe that quality hours with students is of greater benefit than of quantity hours with students. Many times I do grade papers on Fridays, but it is done with a greater amount of precision as well as my comments are more reflective than just the old stand by of "work harder, write more". I still get my much needed reset on Saturday and Sunday. As a 5 day a week teacher you either rush through grading during prep time or abuse your days off from family to grade when your supposed to be off.

Teachers in the classroom are a dying breed due to online services and classes. On-line in my humble opinion is a horrible way to teach students, and yes I have done it prior to Covid and obviously when the Covid outbreak put schools on-line. Parents and students will not be receptive to coming back to a 5 day week and will instead put more students on-line in the assembly line process. Average work will be done and higher learning will be a thing of the past.

Lastly, I believe greatly in local control. Please do not wrap our small school learning system to a large school learning system as they are on opposite ends of the spectrum. As a state we are struggling to keep up with teacher demand and I strongly believe that adding days to the school year will drastically cause teachers to move on to other areas. Reducing class size is the way to teach effectively, not adding days to the calendar.

Respectfully submitting,
Darrell Chenault Elida Municipal Schools

From: [Rachel Ponder](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4day week
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:20:01 AM

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Hello my name is Rachel ponder and I have three students in quamado school district I live over 132 miles from the school we have to drive that daily to get them there and back the gas for DM helps slightly but that has nothing to do with the time and energy that it takes my children to put forth to ride in the car 4 hours a day and do 9 hours of schooling 4 days a week we cannot do 5 days a week like that I can they can't do that and learn if you had ever sat in a car 4 hours a day just to go to school and learn they are in the car by 5:30 in the morning and they are in the car until 5:45 at night four days a week that is just enough I can't do it any longer than that they are learning they have great grades none of them are failing and we are getting all the education we need in the four days the money that it will cost to pay staff gas per diems food and everything else lights energy all of those things at the school for another day a week are not worth it the teachers and students will be exhausted along with parents and athletes it is impossible and unless you've lived out here I guess you just don't understand what it feels like to drive white knuckled down dirt road 32 miles to get to a bus stop four times a day just to see your child get an education 5 days a day a week is too much as a single mom I cannot work and get them educated at 5 days so thank you for listening be blessed Merry Christmas and thank you for our four day school week

From: [Rebecca Rodger](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day week
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:38:08 AM

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Thank you for considering this legislation. For my family and kids, it has greatly improved our mental health and overall happiness to have a 4-day school week. I strongly support this being allowed! More hours in school was already a poor decision, in my opinion, but please allow them to allocate them as is best for each individual school. Thank you.

Rebecca Rodger

Parent and Taos Middle School Counselor

From: [Anne Lear](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed School Calendar Changes
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:42:58 AM

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TO PED and NM State Government Leaders:

I am writing to present my concerns about PED's proposal to change rules governing school calendars. This school year it was made clear that PED favors increasing the number of days students and staff are in session and at work, despite evidence showing that a shorter week (4 days) does not negatively impact students' test scores and graduation rates. I work as a Project Aware Mental Health Clinician at the Socorro schools and have asked many of my student clients how they would feel about returning to a five-day week. Every student I asked has said that having four days of instruction and then three days for the weekend gives them time to rest, work on big assignments as needed, go to appointments, have family events, and participate in sports without disrupting their school days. Most middle and high-school students I talked to also said that if forced back to a 5-day week, they would probably try to stay home on Fridays because, as one student put it, "we get burned out, and so do the teachers, and it is bad for everyone."

Socorro High School's graduation rate has actually increased significantly in the past few years, and across the schools student test scores have improved to acceptable levels. Even more important, teacher recruitment and retention have improved because teachers from other communities find a 4-day commute feasible. Many older students have noted that they like having the same teachers around because they can make meaningful connections with them during the school year and beyond. But we stand to lose a significant number of teachers and other staff, both local and commuter, if we are forced to return to a five-day school week. As an experienced mental health clinician, I hear many perspectives and concerns from staff and students, and just about everyone I have spoken to about this has said they strongly oppose it. Why is PED pushing this plan when it is clear from all feedback so far that this will negatively impact students and staff? What is the real agenda that is causing PED to ignore the concerns of the people they purport to serve? If PED forces this plan on all districts in New Mexico, the disruption to schools, students, and families throughout the state will be devastating, particularly for the staff who have been working so hard to improve the quality of education AND life for our students. Does PED really want to blow up the current education system - which IS improving thanks to hard-working staff - for some agenda they refuse to reveal? That is not an appropriate use of its authority or power, and it would be undemocratic for PED and the state government to force a drastic change that a significant majority of citizens oppose. Step back from your myopic vision of what's "best" for our children and actually listen to your constituents. Our children's futures are depending on PED and the state government following the will of the people and doing what is right, not what is politically expedient.

Sincerely,

Anne C. Lear, LMFT, LPCC
Project Aware Mental Health Clinician
Socorro Consolidated Schools

--

Mental Health Clinician, Project AWARE
Socorro High School
1200 Michigan Ave.

Socorro, NM 87801
alear@socorroschools.org
575-418-7902



From: [Jeff Spaletta](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four-Day vs. Five-Day
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:52:33 AM

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Dear Feedback Committee,

I hope this email finds you well. I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed shift from a five-day to a four-day work week in all New Mexico schools.

After careful consideration and experience working in both schedules, I would like to express my strong support for maintaining a five-day school week. In my opinion, the move to a four-day week may have unintended consequences and is not in the best interest of our students. Here are some key points to consider:

1. **Academic Impact:** Students in New Mexico are already behind, and reducing instructional time by moving to a four-day week is likely to exacerbate this issue. Numerous studies indicate that fewer hours in the classroom lead to lower grades and diminished academic performance.
2. **Inequity:** The four-day week may introduce inequities, particularly for low-income and poverty-stricken students who rely on schools for meals and supervision. A reduction in the number of school days could disproportionately affect these students.
3. **Juvenile Crime:** Research suggests a correlation between a four-day school week and an increase in juvenile crime. Maintaining a consistent schedule with more structured time in school helps deter such issues.
4. **Adult Focus vs. Child Welfare:** It is essential to prioritize the needs of the students over the preferences of adults. While some may argue for the benefits of a four-day work week for adults, it is crucial to consider the potential negative impact on students' education and well-being. The decision should be on what's best for students.
5. **Minimal Cost Savings:** The cost savings associated with a four-day week appear to be minimal, especially when considering the potential negative effects on student learning and outcomes.
6. **Administrative Workload:** While there may be concerns about administrative workload, it is essential to maintain a commitment to providing students with the instructional time they need for a well-rounded education.

I believe that a five-day school week is crucial for the effective operation of a school district. It provides the necessary time for instruction, support services, and extracurricular activities that contribute to a comprehensive education for our students. Thank you for considering my input on this important matter. I hope that the decision-making process takes into account the long-term impact on our students and their educational success.

Sincerely,

Jeff Spaletta, Ed.D.

From: [Charles Petersen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Cc: [Charles Petersen](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:15:08 PM

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Hello:

As a teacher, I am not in favor of the new proposed calendar. I also don't believe that throwing money at problems, solves problems. My students made 220% and 187% gains on the iReady in the Winter and Spring respectively. Holding "schools" accountable sounds reasonable, but I would take a look at what other successful states are doing. Our district is making things worse and worse by totally denigrating effective discipline measures, and have just thrown out the window all effective management strategies, tardy policy, and the ineffective "restorative justice" system--under which, schools have gotten worse and worse. How can you SHUT DOWN schools for almost two solid years, put in place ineffective online learning, and then blame the schools and teachers?

--

Thank you,

Chuck Petersen

Math/Science/Sped/Gifted/ELA/K--8/History/Psychology

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From: [Wayne Ellison](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] oppose new ruling
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:45:12 PM

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I am a teacher of 30 years in NM. I oppose the new raking. We want to keep our 4 day school in Capitan!
Wayne Ellison

From: [Jamaica Hamilton](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on HB130 - Against HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:46:36 PM

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Honorable Kristina Ortez,

Thanks for being our state representative.

I am writing to protest the New Mexico Public Education Department's interpretation of House Bill 130 from 2023. This bill spells out the requirement for a certain number of instructional hours and days in K-12 schools. Furthermore, the opening paragraph and lines 11-18 on page 4 both refer to schools with 4-days per week. However, it appears that the NM public education department is choosing to interpret this law as requiring 5-day school weeks for all schools in order to meet the total number of school hours.

This is disastrous for schools that already have instructional programs and staffing designed around a 4-day school week. I believe in reasonable government regulation, but this level of control interferes with talented educators' ability to manage their own school within the bounds of state limits that have already been set. My son attends Taos Integrated school of the Arts where this proposed policy would upend the model of our school. Also, we know that schools are better able to retain good teachers when they have weekend flexibility, by not having school on Fridays.

We stand against HB130, and as our Representative, we urge you to do the same. Please help us by gathering like-minded colleagues, and referring the New Mexico Education Department to the appropriate authorities and ask them to follow the law as it is written, not according to their whim. As long as students receive an equivalent education, we believe in freedom for schools to choose how they get there.

I appreciate your time & efforts.

Thank you,

--

Jamaica S. Hamilton

From: [Jamaica Hamilton](#)
To: kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov; [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against NMPED's Proposed Change to HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:02:19 PM

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

Honorable Kristina Ortez,

Thanks for being our state representative.

I am writing to protest the New Mexico Public Education Department's proposal to change House Bill 130. This bill spells out the requirement for a certain number of instructional hours and days in K-12 schools. Furthermore, the opening paragraph and lines 11-18 on page 4 both refer to schools with 4-days per week. However, it appears that the NM public education department is choosing to interpret this law as requiring 5-day school weeks for all schools in order to meet the total number of school hours.

This is disastrous for schools that already have instructional programs and staffing designed around a 4-day school week. I believe in reasonable government regulation, but this level of control interferes with talented educators' ability to manage their own school within the bounds of state limits that have already been set.

My son attends **Taos Integrated school of the Arts** where this proposed policy would upend the model of our school. As an NM Spotlight School, TISA has grown and thrived over the years. Besides top quartile academic performance, TISA has sported some of the best attendance in the State, plus during times that other schools in the areas had to rely on long-term subs due to a lack of formal, licensed teachers, TISA has placed fully licensed teachers in all classrooms and specials positions, thanks in part to the ability to operate under a 4-day work week. The 4-day week allows some staff to work 10-hour days, thus those staff can stay until 5 pm to supervise free aftercare for students.

The history of success at TISA clearly shows that a 4-day school week effectively supports the academic experience for our students and fosters a healthier work-life balance for our students, families, and staff. Studies show what we at TISA already know; a 4-day week provides for an extra day of individually structured enrichment or rest, providing students and teachers with more time to recharge and pursue professional development, extracurricular activities, relaxation, and family bonding. The 3-day weekend leads to improved social-emotional health, reduced stress, and

increased motivation and energy when returning to school on Mondays. Studies also show that a reduced school week can result in cost savings for both families and the school district due to reduced expenses for transportation, food services, and utilities.

Please help us ensure the continued success of the 4-day model by sharing your concerns and lack of support for changing HB130.

We stand against changing HB130 to require a 5-day school week, and as our Representative, we urge you to do the same.

I appreciate your time & efforts.

Thank you,

--

Jamaica S. Hamilton

From: [Silvina Farmin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changes for next year?
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:37:32 PM

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To whom it may concern

The proposed change would mean that **all** 1140 hours would have to be classroom time, and cannot include PD, collaboration, or parent conferences. Excluding those necessary components of the job from the definition of instructional hours would, yet again, require an extension of our already extended school year.

No NO NO

We are already working many more hours planning, connecting with families and grading on top of contract hours.

Please reconsider, so many of us are retiring early because you are making a difficult job much harder. This will increase teacher vacancies due to burnout.

--

Silvina Torre Farmin M.A. Multicultural/TESOL Ed

She, Her, Ella

Social Studies/Estudios Sociales

Bilingual Advisory Committee /Community School Council/Discipline

Committee/Equity Team

National Hispanic Honor Society

G.S.A. Co-sponsor/SAFE ZONE/*Crafty Dawgs/Dream Team*

Albuquerque High School

505-480-3651(c)

Room 513

Coelho



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From: [Steven Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Should we have 4-day school weeks or 5-day school weeks?
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:55:19 PM

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Dear NM PED,

Regarding your thoughts on making 5-day school weeks required, I may have some words of wisdom about the subject. For Quemado High School, 4-day school weeks have been a constant and consistent part of going to school here, and it is an essential part of the school's curriculum, culture, and community. A large portion of the students that go to Quemado High School live up to an hour away from the campus, as it is a large portion of students are often burnt out or tired by Wednesday from the commute from home to school and school to home, this can cause issues paying attention or sleeping. Although this is bad on its own, if we had another day of school I project that the issues would multiply at least twofold. Another reason for keeping 4-day school weeks is that a lot of families are Ranchers/Farmers and use Friday as a day to teach their kids about what they do, another reason is Friday is often used as a utility to be able to schedule appointments for certain things that would generally require a school day to be missed. Also, sports is a large portion of attending this school, with Friday off we can use that day to go to various basketball or any other sports games because of our distance from any other school. With different extracurricular activities, we also use Friday to practice or go to the place we need to go to compete. If you are concerned that 4-day weeks don't allow for the proper time to be able to understand and do well in core classes you are mistaken as our school has statistics such as a 98% 4-year graduation rate and our school ranks in the top 20% in reading, math, and science proficiency. Another reason to keep it where we can choose is that law 22-8-23.14 authorizes both 4-day and 5-day school weeks as well and State law 22-2-8.1 focuses on hours used for instruction, not days. One last note to add to this is that Legislation states that departmental regulations cannot override statutory authorization.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that schools should be able to choose if we go 4 or 5-day school weeks, not be forced into a 5-day week.

Sincerely,
Steven M Johnson

From: [Mark Kelley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Purposed Rule Changes for NM Schools
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:56:57 PM

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Dear Sirs:

I am vehemently opposed to longer school year and a 5 day week. Rural schools work better on 4 day weeks as students often travel long distances to school.

It is proven by NMPED that 86.1 % of all 4 day weeks meet performance expectations, compared to 72.9% for our 5 day counterparts. it is proven that longer school years lead to student and teacher fatigue, resulting in less learning and poorer teaching.

Small schools with 4 day weeks enjoy better learning for the students, and better teacher retention.

Better teacher retention leads to more personal relationships between teachers and students, thus developing better learning strategies.

It is my belief that local jurisdictions can better regulate the needs of their students, teachers, and classrooms.

Sincerely,

Mark Kelley

From: [Beth Thornton](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 3:01:43 PM

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To Whom This May Concern:

I want to express my opposition to the new proposed 180-day calendar (Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC). Texico Schools has been a four day school for twelve years. I have taught in this district for over thirty years and I have seen the advantages of the four day week. Texico has maintained extremely high standards for students. We are always among the highest ranked schools in the state. This year, Texico Elementary earned a rating of Excellence, Texico Middle School earned a rating of Excellence, and Texico High School is considered a Spotlight School.

According to the Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14) school districts are authorized to operate on 4-day or 5-day school weeks. Also, the state law grants local school districts the flexibility to design their own calendars. The PED's proposed rule change would remove this local authority.

This proposed change will not benefit our school or community in any way. Adding more days to the school year is not the answer to the educational problems we face in this State. Most of the schools with a four day week are among the higher rated districts. We have strong educational values, strong academics, and strong athletic teams that consistently achieve excellent results.

Attendance is good because families and staff have a day to schedule appointments, which for small rural communities, is often hundreds of miles away. There is already a huge shortage of teachers and substitutes.

The additional days added to the calendar will increase staff absences when the students need their teacher to be there to teach, not at an appointment they could have scheduled on an off day. We are also an agricultural community, where many of our students still work and help out on family farms and ranches.

Cost savings was a big part of the reasoning behind the original four day week. This would be a substantial cost increase for school budgets. There are many reasons the four day week works well for the rural communities. This one-size fits all does not work well for rural New Mexico.

Please reconsider this proposal.

Sincerely,
Beth Thornton

Beth Thornton

Phone: (575)482-9520

Email: bthornton@texicoschools.com

Address: 520 Griffin St., PO Box 237, Texico, NM 88135

From: [Deborah Muldawer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 3:59:18 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my dismay at the sudden and ill-thought-out change in School Calendar Requirements. Research has consistently shown that teacher education and collaboration leads to student success. Hours and days in school do not correlate with success. In Finland, the world's top school system, students only go to school from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM and attend for fewer days than most states in America. So why are they so successful? The leading theory is that policies and decisions about schools are made by educators, not by politicians.

When the original calendar was formed and voted into law, educator voices were included. The decision was made after input from multiple shareholders and allowed for best teaching practices. This new rule, though made with good intentions, will not help student achievement. Instead, it will lead to teacher burnout and a mass exodus from the profession.

I started working at APS in 1995 and have seen many changes over the years. Paperwork has become increasingly burdensome, students have become increasingly disrespectful, and all fingers are pointed at teacher accountability.

As teachers work harder and harder, students and parents do less and less. Adding extra days will not help students who only want to play on their computers or talk to their friends. Adding extra days will not help students who refuse to do their assignments or who talk back or make disruptive noises. Adding extra days will not address the underlying issues of poverty, homelessness, and crime. All it will do is add to teacher burnout.

Having our future citizens learn from exhausted and overworked teachers will not lead to success. Instead, teachers will rely on scripted programs and auto grading. Creativity and critical thinking will become extinct. There will be high teacher turnover as people realize that they could earn higher pay and gain more respect in other professions.

If you want to save our schools and our children's future, please reverse your decision and stand by the law approved by educators and parents, legislators and unions. The teachers and students of New Mexico are counting on you.

--

Deborah Muldawer
Exploratory Music, Gifted Seminar, Gifted ELA
muldawer@aps.edu
(505) 227-8307

From: [Joseph Marquez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School calender requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:02:48 PM

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This is in regards to 6.10.5 NMAC School Calender Requirements. I have 2 children 1 in Pre k and another in middle school. My Children are doing great with the 160 day school calendar that they have now. I've seen my son excell in all his subjects. He finally made the A honor roll. My daughter has also excelled in pre k. She is autistic and has made major progress in her class. I would like you to reconsider keeping the 160 school calendar and not go to 180 days. Thank you.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [David Dawson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule NMAC 6.10.5 Feedback
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:19:37 PM

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Hello,

I am an elementary school teacher and oppose the proposed rule change.

There are better ways for our districts to spend money in the ongoing effort to improve student proficiency. The single greatest variable in predicting student success is a low student to teacher ratio, especially when applied to early years of a student's education. Adding days to the school year calendar has mixed to no effect but comes at a cost burden to the districts.

My suggestion is that the money earmarked for this rule change would be better spent on increasing licensed staff. This need not be additional teachers per grade level but could be affected by employing Math and Reading specialists that work with students from all grade levels at a given school at the time that a particular grade level was conducting that subject area instruction. It would require creative scheduling so that these specialists could ease the student teacher ratio at the times that Math and Language Arts instruction was occurring at each grade level. But that is a surmountable issue.

Finding research affirming that lower Teacher/Student ratios works and that additional days have minimal impact takes moments. Please rethink the uninformed rule NMAC 6.10.5.

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From: [Jessi Adkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed calendar changes
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:44:02 PM

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Hello- I am a teacher in APS and I have some concerns about the proposed calendar changes that NMPED is considering.

I am concerned that adding extra instructional days, excluding time for professional development, family conferences, and other professional duties from the calendar, and implementing two drastic calendar changes back to back in two school years is inconsiderate of the already harried educators, support staff, and families that have been juggling chaotic, inconsistent schedules over the past several years. I am concerned that educators are leaving the profession in droves because of the burn out of being asked to do more with less and less time and support. I am concerned that the issues that are hoped to be addressed by more instructional hours are not a matter of time, but are a matter of inadequate supports for behavior, instruction, special education, class size, and lack of staff, and adding more instructional days without addressing the other problems will only exacerbate the issues.

I am concerned that the lack of attention to failing infrastructure and buildings is leading to dangerously hot and cold classrooms and this has not been fixed before sending students back to school in the hottest time of the year. I am concerned that buildings and campuses are still not secure and we were told security measures were being put in place but we have not seen this at all, nor heard of it since it was on the news in August. I am concerned that educators are drowning in paperwork that cannot be done during their contract hours, cleaning their own classrooms, attending meetings during school hours that pull them from their students (I have been in over a dozen IEPs this year for students who are not my own) and the answer is still "Do More".

I am concerned that extending breaks in the year looks nice on paper, but puts tens of thousands of families in the precarious position of finding childcare in an economy that does not allow them to take time away from their jobs, or pay for outside help.

You are losing educators, You are failing students and families. I urge you to consider how your changes affect them.

--

Jessi Adkins *she/they*
PreK Teacher
McCollum Elementary School
jessicah.adkins@aps.edu

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recipient you are not authorized to reveal any of this information to any other unauthorized person. If you did not receive all pages listed or if pages are not legible, please immediately notify sender by phone.

From: [Linda Baldock](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 5:17:51 PM

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I am writing to OPPOSE HB130. NM is a vast state that is not one-size fits all. The local school boards should have final control of their school's calendar, length of school day, and length of school week, as long as the number of required hours are met.

I will not go into the numerous reasons since many others have done so.

Again, I AM OPPOSED to HB130

Linda Baldock, MSED, BS

Retired English Teacher, parent, grandparent, tax-payer

From: [COLT ADAMS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 5:41:57 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 concern as a parent who has a Corona high school student, we are mostly a ranching and farming community and it would deeply impact the whole family to have to school week be changed from a 4 day a week calendar to a 5 day a week calendar!! We all depend on our sons and daughters to help out and having a 3 day weekend greatly helps with Ranching and Farming chores. Please do not make the smaller ranching and farming communities conform with the big cities because we are in no way the same!

Thank you,
From a concerned parent
Rachel Adams
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rebecca Jacquez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements and 6.19.4.1 (Accreditation Procedures)
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:43:32 PM

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

My name is Rebecca Jacquez with two children attending school. I absolutely oppose the new proposal 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements) as well as the 6.19.4.1 (Accreditation Procedures). My children are excelling and thriving because they are able to get the most out of school time and family time. They have never expressed feeling of being overwhelmed by school. I feel by implementing this it will only take time away from family (just as if not more important) than school time. If this were to be implemented my husband and I would more than likely consider homeschooling or another means of education. The last thing our teachers and staff need is more work and the last thing our kids need is more time at school. We respectfully request these changes not be made. As it will impact many families in a negative way.

Thank you!!

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: [Rebecca Canavan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 150-180 day proposal
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:00:59 PM

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As a parent of two middle school-age daughters, I am against the proposal of going from four days to five days. The longer weekend helps them to recover and rest, as well as have them look forward to school on Monday. I think if anything should be changed it should be year-round school. So that they continue to learn without a long enough break for them to have to go back to relearn or catch up and to have a break to test. If they were going, it would stay fresh the longer breaks would help them maintain wanting to go to school and not feel overwhelmed for when they return or for testing and placement of their knowledge. I do not see five days of benefit, my girls have attended schools where it's a five day school week and I can tell a drastic difference in them attending four days instead.

Thank you

From: [Mandy Ross](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Disagree with purposed changes to 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:03:40 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 a parent of two children in Cloudcroft School grades 4th and 1st. I have recently become aware of the proposed amendment to 6.10.5 MAC, addressing the number of school days required for all of NM.

Currently Cloudcroft enjoys a 150 day school year, and has for several years. This change would require a 180 day school year which would affect our entire community greatly, moving us from a 4 day school week to a 5 day school week. Many parents have adjusted their lives, jobs, childcare around this school calendar year and changing that would require them to possibly change jobs and find new childcare solutions. In a community that already struggles to find jobs and childcare in the mountains and still be able to afford to live here, this would impact our students and families in a very negative way.

We also have more than proven that our students and teachers still meet all standards in education, in extra curricular activities and are continuing to grow and move forward and are preparing our students for the future.

This proposed amendment would take away our local control and undermine our ability to make decisions that best serve our district and community.

Please consider our position and how these changes would negatively impact the future of Cloudcroft students and families.

Thank you,

Mandy Ross

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Carlos Valentine](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:52:29 PM

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To Whom it May Concern:

It seems like you've outlined several valid concerns regarding the proposal to transition all schools in New Mexico to a 5-day school schedule. If this proposal is being considered, it's important for stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members, to engage in open discussions and provide input on the potential impacts.

Some key points to consider in these discussions include:

Commute and Transportation Issues: For rural schools, longer commutes for students, parents, and teachers can be a significant challenge. This could lead to increased transportation costs and difficulties for families, potentially affecting attendance and overall well-being.

Budget Constraints: Our rural schools operate with limited budgets, and the transition to a 5-day schedule will require additional resources for transportation, utilities, and staff salaries. Addressing these budgetary concerns is crucial for sustainable implementation. If increasing the budget of our schools in our rural area is not an attainable goal, then neither is changing the school schedule from 4 days to 5 days.

Teacher Shortages: Our rural area faces challenges in attracting and retaining qualified teachers. The transition to a 5-day schedule will exacerbate teacher shortages, impacting the quality of education for our children.

Impact on Work Schedules: Parents, such as myself and my wife, will face difficulties in adjusting our work schedules to accommodate the new school schedule. This could lead to challenges in childcare arrangements, which there are none in Angel Fire and Eagle Nest, and potential impacts on continued employment.

Medical Appointments: Mondays are primary days for medical appointments, changing the school schedule to include Mondays might lead to increased absenteeism with my kids and school staff, affecting the overall learning environment.

Community Input: It's essential to involve the local community in the decision-making process. Town hall meetings, surveys, and other forms of public input can provide valuable perspectives on the proposed changes. A decision cannot be made arbitrarily without our input.

Flexibility: Consideration should be given to allowing schools the flexibility to choose the schedule that best suits their unique circumstances. One size may not fit all, and different schools may have different needs.

Advocating for a comprehensive and collaborative approach, involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process, will help address these concerns and ensure that any changes made are in the best interest of the students and the community as a whole.

I hope that these concerns are considered carefully and not ignored.

A Concerned Parent,
Carlos F Valentine
720.829.0820

From: [Angelica Marquez \(Marquez97\)](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for:
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:56:29 PM

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Hello I'm sending my feedback on the 4 day week. I honestly hate it. The kids go to school earlier and earlier each year they started school in July I believe when normally they wouldn't be starting school till almost mid August as well as having to be in by 7:50 when before the late bell was 8:15. Lunchtime is earlier too at 11:30 it's still morning causing kids to come home hungry. Also due to school being out on Fridays it makes it hard on some parents who work on Fridays.

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: [Joan Newsom](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:04:04 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-iv2v3hfe.png](#)

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The proposed PED rule change is probably illegal because it attempts to change HB 130, which was vetted and passed this past year by the New Mexico legislature. I understand that **the proposed change means that all 1140 hours in the school year would have to be classroom time, and can no longer include PD, collaboration, or parent conferences.** These necessary components of the job would then require another extension of the school year.

I am a dedicated, hard-working teacher in APS, a National Board Certified Teacher since 2006. The proposed PED rule change lacks the support of teachers who are already overworked and underappreciated. The proposed change also does not contain evidence that it will benefit students or academic learning. Instead of revising HB 130, the NM PED should spend more time taking steps as best they can to support us hard-working teachers so that we may better serve our students. The proposed change to HB 130 clearly does not do that.

Joan Newsom

Joan Newsom (she/her)
National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)
Albuquerque High School
Home of the Bulldogs
505.843.6400
505-263-9396 (cell)



From: [Shannon Mounyo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:36:19 PM

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TO: New Mexico Public Education Department

RE: HB 130

I am a veteran educator of 28 years in the New Mexico Public School System. I began my teaching career as a multi-grade elementary teacher in Datil, NM, where I spent 5 years, before transferring to Magdalena Municipal Schools where I have taught for the last 23 years. Both of these rural Districts utilize the 4 day school week; therefore, I am **strongly** opposed to HB 130! Students who attend 4 days school weeks are required to attend the same number of instructional hours as 5 day school weeks and consistently perform higher on reading and math scores as published by the New Mexico Public Education Vistas Report. I have witnessed huge amounts of growth attained by my students academically, socially, and emotionally throughout my many years of experience.

I have commuted all of my 28 years from Socorro to either Datil or Magdalena because of the opportunity to teach 4 days versus 5, which was an incentive, rather than teaching in a district I reside in. 4 day school weeks increase staff morale and often helps promote and retain highly qualified staff, which is clearly evident at Magdalena Elementary.

By teaching in a rural community, all of my personal business (banking, doctors/dentist appointments, etc.) have to be scheduled on Fridays due to the long distances I sometimes have to travel. I am unable to complete any of these engagements during the day or week as it would require me to take off work. The same goes for my students. I highly encourage faithful attendance in my 3rd grade classroom, so the parents of my students try their best to schedule appointments on non-school days. Going to a 5 day school week would definitely affect the attendance of both my students and me.

A sense of family culture is definitely more prevalent in smaller communities. Many of our students, of all ages, use their 3 day weekend to assist with family affairs such as ranching, guiding hunters, and wood cutting, just to name a few. Employment opportunities are scarce in smaller communities and it oftentimes requires the entire family to work together to survive.

In small rural schools, many times you are asked to wear a variety of hats. I am also a bus driver for the Magdalena Municipal School District. I am responsible for transporting our athletes home after practice as well as students who stay after school for tutoring. My route one way is 35 miles to the Alamo Navajo Reservation. Most evenings I do not return to campus until 7:30pm or later. The cost to our District in fuel by the additional days would be detrimental. This doesn't even consider what additional heating and cooling costs for the buildings and cafeteria expenses would compute to.

There are many teachers like myself that are eligible to retire. Forcing Districts to go from 4 days to 5 days would most likely encourage eligible retirees to go ahead and retire rather than serving our students for additional years. I believe the number of teachers eligible to retire far exceeds the number of new teachers coming into the profession. HB 130 would drastically create much more of a teacher shortage than there already is. Filling those positions with substitutes and non-certified staff is not the answer.

Please allow individual Districts to make the best decisions educationally and financially for their students, staff, and community. HB 130 is not the resolution to improving academic success for New Mexico students!

I give my consent for my letter to be read aloud at the public hearing meeting on December 18, 2023 should it be chosen.

Shannon Mounyo

3rd Grade Teacher

Substitute/Activity Bus Driver

Declamation/Spelling Bee Sponsor

National Dance Institute In-School Coordinator

Magdalena Elementary School

Phone: (575) 854-8106

Email: smounyo@magschools.us

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From: [Joanne Nunez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5 nmac
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:52:06 PM

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This email is for regulation 6.10.5 nmac

I think that we do fine with the 4 days a week at this school. (Hondo Schools) why? Well because our kids have done four days a week for years and I feel that the change is too much.

Thank you
Concerned Parent

From: [Lucera Wilmeth](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:28:47 PM

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To NMPED:

There are several issues that can be raised with this proposed change. The loss of local control being the most concerning point. I feel very confident that lots of people are responding with very valid points such as "the research doesn't support this", "the real issue is attendance, hold parents accountable for attendance", "it's questionable of this is even a legal move"...so in a more casual tone, I would like to address the things people aren't thinking about when they make these types of decisions.

I live in a rural district and teach at a local school with a four day week. We have had a four day week for a very long time, I estimate over 20 years. Much of the community's livelihood is built around that schedule that has existed for a very long time. For me personally it is roughly a 45 minute drive to a town with a grocery store or a doctor. That means if I have to take my children to the doctor or take care of any business in town at a bank or business only open Monday-Friday 8-5, I do my very best to schedule it on a Friday, when I'm not working and there is not school, because I realize that a trip to town is at minimum a three hour event with drive time, that is if I only take care of that one item and everything goes smoothly. Living in a rural area is not all like living in town where you can zip over to the grocery store, slip by a pharmacy to pick up a prescription, or say "I'll just take care of it during my lunch break or after school, it won't take but a minute to swing by the bank." There is so much being pushed in our state and education in general, to be culturally inclusive and sensitive. It's important to remember culture isn't just ethnicity, rural life is a culture of its own. People in rural schools all over New Mexico will be greatly impacted by this, and it seems this is the decision of people living in the comfort of Santa Fe with all the conveniences of town. I understand that living in a rural community comes with its own responsibilities, but local control means making decisions about what is best for OUR community, because WE are residents of the community and it affects US. We have school boards in place to make decisions that dictate how our school is run so that it serves OUR community, this decision by the PED doesn't support the rural culture of our community, it is not supported by research, and it simply should be reconsidered.

Lucera Wilmeth
Hondo Valley Public School

From: [Ying Wang Wagner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:21:31 PM

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You might set some rules for certain schools' four-day week. But absolutely slash ALL four-day week is not scientific.

Just extending time will not improve learning out-come. Most important element is students' will. If they do not want to learn, keeping them 360 days in school also makes no difference.

The 5th day can be used by teacher for medical or family obligations, thus improving teacher retention. You know that a good teacher is the most important element for student's learning outcome. So please do not take this benefit away.

From: [Lotem Levitan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:51:52 AM

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Public Education Department:

The 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements rule change proposed is in clear violation of HB 130. Is it your intent to encourage Teacher Flight from New Mexico's public schools? You are a department meant to serve the public and meant to honor the civic process. When you bypass all of the efforts made to include Educators in decisions that involve our careers, livelihoods, and families, you are showing nothing but disrespect for us. We notice.

Along with families, we are raising New Mexican children. When you lose our goodwill and support, our state loses. Teachers are not the scapegoat for our country's educational struggles. Are we currently under the Lujan Grisham Administration or the Martinez Administration? This proposed rule change makes it hard to tell the difference.

I am tired of hearing about all of the reasons for which my co-workers feel so demoralized. How can we possibly recruit more educators with situations like this facing us year after year? Show Educators the respect that is due. We are highly educated, on our toes all day long, raising and educating the future of New Mexico. Our state needs us and I have met too many that are willing to walk away from this career path. Stop this 180-day proposed rule change.

Lotem Levitan
ATF Union Member
Albuquerque Public Schools Employee

From: [Averi Anthony](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 DAY CALENDAR CHANGE
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:50:09 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-tzeqhvop.png](#)

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a teacher/parent at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am completely bothered by the proposed school calendar change to 180 days (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). Our school goes four days a week and we live in a small ranching community that is very family oriented. As a teacher I am able to use Fridays to grade and review data to better prepare lessons that are individually aligned to each students' needs for the next week's lessons. This also allows me to give students and parents frequent feedback on a weekly basis. The three-day weekend allows students to manage their work time and decide how to use independent work time.

As a parent the four-day week allows me to use Friday for appointments such as dentist and doctor, so our kids are not missing schools and important instruction time. As a wife the four-day week allows me to help on our ranch and keep our ranching lifestyle alive with our kids helping. This gives us an opportunity to teach our kids real world working skills that will help them as adults such as budgeting, ratios, technology, medicines, solar energy, conservation, cooking, cleaning, etc. If we are not able to help on the ranch, then we must hire someone and that is money that comes from our family budget. Therefore, that means our family will have to sacrifice something in order to meet the need to pay the help which is wrong just due to the state enforcing a 180-day calendar.

We are a hunting and rodeo family and having Fridays off allows us to travel to our location without our kids missing school and class instruction time. Our town is in the middle of nowhere and in order to get to places we usually have to travel for hours so if we went to school on Fridays it is most likely families would pull kids to allow that day for traveling. Sports also use Fridays to travel a lot, so kids do not miss school time. The 180 days would traumatically change our community and how things and families are run.

If we go to 180 days our kids will miss more school and instructional time due to the needs of living in a rural ranching community. Family is important and our test scores show our kids learn and stay on level or above going four days a week. Schools should be able to adjust their own calendars to meet community needs.

I truly hope this change does not go into effect and schools keep the power to decide how to arrange their school calendar to meet their community needs.

A concerned teacher, mother, wife, and community member,



From: [Eric Helmstetler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed school calendar change
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:06:49 AM

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I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing because we have become aware of rule changes proposed by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) which we feel would negatively impact our current four-day school week schedule. The proposed rule would require all school districts to meet a minimum of 180 student days per academic year, rather than to simply meet the 1,140 instructional hour requirement that is set out in law. Currently, Capitan Municipal Schools has a 155-day instructional calendar. It serves our community well as it meets the 1,140-hour requirement and it preserves our District's already limited resources.

Personally, I am a level II elementary teacher and I coach fall and winter sports as well, and I still have to work the days that I have off in order to survive. Having the extra day to make extra income is the only way that am able to serve the community that I grew up in as a teacher. Thank you for considering what is best for the people in the small communities in New Mexico and keep four day school weeks.

Eric Helmstetler

From: [Angelica Vasquez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:10:02 AM

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Good morning to whoever this may concern.

I am a first grade educator at APS. I have been employed by APS for several years now.

I am an active member of my union, and I serve leadership roles at my school. My job, my students, my staff, and my community are important to me and they hold value.

I have recently heard that House Bill 130 is facing changes that will extend the hours in our day, as well as add extra days to our calendar. The reasoning I am hearing that is given is that educators are not doing enough and more time is needed.

To hear that, is absolutely disheartening, and quite honestly, insulting. I am not saying all educators in the State of New Mexico are doing the best job they can possibly be doing, but the majority of us are, and we face so many challenges that you will never ever see or understand. To hear that we aren't doing enough, leaves us feeling demoralized, and that is not okay. The majority of the employees that I have come to know in my time at APS are the most hard-working, caring individuals I have seen. They are working unpaid hours, providing mental, emotional, and physical support to students each and every day and a lot of time, without any proper pay or recognition.

Many will say teachers have summers off, which in theory and on paper, is in fact, true. However, many teachers take the time to teach summer school, work a summer job, and take the opportunity to take professional development, and plan for the upcoming school year, and forbid, these hard working educators take a week to go on a vacation after working all year long.

Our education system is crumbling, and educators are crying for help, to SUPPORT our children. We are PROFESSIONALS, with degrees, certifications, and a variety of licenses. LISTEN to the people who are in the classroom day in and day out with children with special needs, that are homeless, living in poverty, who come to school to be safe, warm, fed and loved.

If you can recall Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, feeling safe, and the basic needs of being fed, and healthy come FIRST. Educators want to do their job, but they need the support to help our families and students meet their needs first, before great and wonderful instruction can happen.

The schedule this year is not consistent and beneficial for our students for various reasons. The various short weeks make quality instruction difficult as many units require 4-5 days for concepts to stick. Many students, including students with special needs, and primary aged children, need routine and structure that is consistent. Random days off through students off and teachers face behaviors and re-teaching routines, and this is no fault of the teacher or their management.

However, adding more days will burn out students and educators. Breaks are needed, but they need to be consistent. While teachers, including myself, absolutely love being in the classroom with their students, we are also human and need time to reset and take care of ourselves.

Please consider the various factors that this bill will impose. It will create shortages. Teachers will leave. Good, wonderful teachers, and you will find yourself not even having educators to fill these hours you are requiring. More hours of instruction does not equal better education or test scores, and by the way, my students are not a data point. They are kind, wonderful, and intelligent tiny humans all in their own unique way.

More opportunities to learn, more resources, reasonable breaks that don't interfere with instructional time, and outside resources to provide to our struggling families WILL.

Thank you for your time, and please. Just listen.

Ms. Vasquez
First Grade Educator at APS



From: [Molly Mysliwiec](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] no to 190 days
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:20:55 AM

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Our students come first and not bureaucratic reforms that do nothing to address the real issues our communities and students face. Let's reduce class size loads and add more planning time, not increase days.

Our communities benefit from flexible school weeks. A one-size-fits-all model does not work for our students and communities. Instructional hours provide flexibility, not mandated days.

Attendance is down. Mandating more days is only going to aggravate the situation. Teachers are tired. It's too much. Help us, don't mandate more that we have to do.

Sincerely,

Molly Mysliwiec, SpEd teacher

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From: [Sauceda, Andrea](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:27:03 AM

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I am a Junior at Jal High School and I am against the HB130 that will change our four day week back to five days because it gets in the way of work for students that have jobs. Right now our four day school weeks give students that have jobs more days to work. It also gives students more days to rest and their concentration is better during a shorter school week.

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12-6-23

Regarding: School Calendar Requirements

To whom it may concern,

This is in regards to the School Calendar Requirements and the HB-130 which was passed in the 2023 legislature session. It required all schools to have a minimum of 1140 hours per year. This requirement was for a 4 and 5 day school week.

The Public Education Department updated the rule and disregarded the provisions in HB-130 and decided to make their own rules and totally disregarded the bill. The PED is not above the law. They want all schools on a 5 day work week and no professional time will be counted in the 1140 hours. Teachers need time to collaborate with colleagues and have time for training to continue to master their teaching.

Cimarron Municipal Schools have scored higher than most schools in the state. The middle school in the the top 10%, Cimarron HS and elementary are designated as Traditional which means they are on target with state standards. Eagle Nest Elementary and Middle are also designated as Traditional and are also on target. Our scores in almost every tested category have gained from 2021-2022 to 2023. We are obviously on the right track.

Cimarron Municipal Schools have been on a 4 day school week since 1972 and this was due to several reasons:

1. Staff and students have to travel to other cities for doctor and dentist appointments and we are a rural community, which means we have to travel to Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Colorado. Staff and families try to plan appointments on Mondays for this reason.
2. Attendance of staff and students is important and directly impacts students' learning to miss school which the 5 day school week would do.
3. We have limited substitutes available for the entire district.
4. We have limited bus drivers and many are working second jobs or have property and livestock to care for on those Mondays.
5. Approximately 90% of our middle and high school students are involved in sports and extracurricular activities and due to our rural location have to travel long distances for games and tournaments. A 5 day school week will affect attendance and class time.
6. The Cimarron district is made up of three villages with a long standing history of cultural and employment traditions that would be greatly impacted by a 5 day school week.
7. Many staff work a 2nd job on Mondays and the weekends.
8. It is very difficult to hire teachers and staff in our rural community and a 4 day work week can be appealing when recruiting staff.
9. The teacher shortage is growing and if we go to a 5 day school week there are teachers thinking about retirement or leaving the field.
10. A 5 day school week will bring teacher burnout to returning teachers and staff.

11. It takes approximately \$52,682 per day for Cimarron School District to operate, including transportation, food service, staff, utilities, supplies.
12. We would need to increase our calendar by 31 instructional days to meet the 180 days of school.
13. Staff contracts would have to increase by 37 days since professional work hours are no longer included in the minimum instructional time.
14. Cimarron School District would need an additional \$1.6 million to implement the new rule PED wants to put in place. Where is that money going to come from? Do we cut programs, athletics, staff, teachers, counselors, which in turn hurts our kids by putting more kids in each classroom and doing away with educational interventions and activities that keep kids interested in school.

This idea of going to 180 days may be a good idea for the larger districts in the state but this would cause nothing but a horrendous domino effect for Cimarron Municipal School District. Why change something that does not need to be fixed?

Mary Bachechi
Special Education EA
Eagle Nest Elementary

From: [Edward Alvarez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] school calendar
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:00:28 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 like to express my deepest disappointment in the government officials who are proposing such a change in the school calendar without even understanding the significance of the change. If they understood the reasons why this proposal is damaging to smaller school districts, this would not be up for consideration. Smaller school districts have to figure out school budgets in today's shrinking financial challenges. The four day school week eliminates one day of expenditures for expenses such as utilities, busing, school lunches and other daily expenses which are incurred. The data from the studies on a 4 day school week vs. a 5 day show no significant change in student performance. Therefore, I believe this is all a political stunt by our state education department. I hope that the state reconsiders its proposal and does not succumb to political pressures to make these changes. Thank you for your understanding.

From: [Rachel Valentine](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Request to allow Cimarron School District to remain at the 4-day/week school calendar
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:00:34 AM

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I have the following concerns (outlined by another parent, but fully agreed upon):

Commute and Transportation Issues: For rural schools, longer commutes for students, parents, and teachers can be a significant challenge. This could lead to increased transportation costs and difficulties for families, potentially affecting attendance and overall well-being.

Budget Constraints: Our rural schools operate with limited budgets, and the transition to a 5-day schedule will require additional resources for transportation, utilities, and staff salaries. Addressing these budgetary concerns is crucial for sustainable implementation. If increasing the budget of our schools in our rural area is not an attainable goal, then neither is changing the school schedule from 4 days to 5 days.

Teacher Shortages: Our rural area faces challenges in attracting and retaining qualified teachers. The transition to a 5-day schedule will exacerbate teacher shortages, impacting the quality of education for our children.

Impact on Work Schedules: Parents, such as myself and my wife, will face difficulties in adjusting our work schedules to accommodate the new school schedule. This could lead to challenges in childcare arrangements, which there are none in Angel Fire and Eagle Nest, and potential impacts on continued employment.

Medical Appointments: Mondays are primary days for medical appointments, changing the school schedule to include Mondays might lead to increased absenteeism with my kids and school staff, affecting the overall learning environment.

Community Input: It's essential to involve the local community in the decision-making process. Town hall meetings, surveys, and other forms of public input can provide valuable perspectives on the proposed changes. A decision cannot be made arbitrarily without our input.

Flexibility: Consideration should be given to allowing schools the flexibility to choose the schedule that best suits their unique circumstances. One size may not fit all, and different schools may have different needs.

Advocating for a comprehensive and collaborative approach, involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process, will help address these concerns and ensure that any changes made are in the best interest of the students and the community as a whole.

Please take these concerns into consideration. A 'one size fits all' approach for the whole state is not the best option in my opinion.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

--

Rachel Valentine, DVM

Blue Grama, LLC

Veterinary Services & Sheep and Goat Ranch

PO Box 38

Angel Fire, NM 87710

(208) 890-4339

From: [Steven Hegmann](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] extra PD days would be a waste of time
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:19:28 AM

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I am a teacher at Capital HS. I believe extra professional development days would be a waste of time. I agree with more instruction days if we compensate the employees for the extra days.

Steve Hegmann

New Mexico History teacher
Capital High School

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From: [JUDY WILLIAMS](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:20:05 AM

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Your recent rule change proposal (6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements) should not be implemented. I have been involved with public education in New Mexico for 30 years and the rule you have proposed has no foundation, nor any acceptable data to prove its validity. An article published in 2019, *Expanded In-School Instructional Time and the Advancement of Health Equity: A Community Guide Systematic Review* specifically states, "Analysis of data from a nationwide survey showed that a longer school year (above 180 days) had a negative impact on overall student achievement. The best results were achieved with 7 classes per day, each class lasting 45 minutes or less," as well as referencing, "Three studies found that expanding school time did not significantly change test scores for mathematics, English, or science." Other concerns such as chronic absenteeism would not be helped by adding additional days to the school calendar. The only benefit to the state might be the watering down of attendance numbers by adding additional days in order to improve percentages. According to The Educational Advisory Board (EAB) Post Pandemic Chronic Absenteeism is absolutely connected to the fact that, "Parents see less value in in-person education." A survey of administrators completed by the EAB also showed that 85% of district leaders agree that parent belief in the importance of daily attendance is lower now than in previous years, neither of which can be solved by adding more days to the school calendar. The other reasons cited by the EAB were lack of student motivation and underutilization of teachers in communicating the importance of daily attendance. The suggested next steps to increase attendance didn't include additional days; instead, the focus was on communication and relationship building between all parties. Teachers, staff, parents, and administrators know full well the challenges facing our classrooms. Adding more days to the calendar in an attempt to fix either attendance or improve learning can be compared to pouring more water into a pool with a giant hole. Can you keep the pool filled by doing that? Yes, but it would be a waste. Wouldn't it be better to listen to the experts? You know, the people who use the pool, swim in the pool, and maintain the pool. These people know how to fix their own pools. Trying to fix the unique and varied issues of individual school districts by applying a one-size-fits-all approach with no foundational studies to back the plan is only going to make matters worse. Our educational leaders, teachers, school boards, and communities have put more time and energy into improving their district than you, as a committee, have put into this "plan" that for all reason and examination can only be considered a whim and power play by the New Mexico Public Education Department. Please listen to the voice of reason. Do not enact this rule.

Thank you for your time,
Judy Williams

TOSA, Clovis Municipal Schools

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From: [Cathy Ann](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:31:16 AM

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I believe a 4 day school week is beneficial for our cobre high community giveng it the ability to keep track with educational progress and less decline ! This town has many factors that we must go to other towns for and friday helps many to have it as a day as personal family business appointments an such . If it was beneficial to Government wise ,we would have seen progress while using different methods and made a choice on that. Thank you for this time if it has reached its place an have a great day.

From: [David D](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:44:19 AM

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Hello,

My name is David Delano, and I am a Social Studies teacher at Capital High School in Santa Fe. I'm writing to express my concern about the changes to the school calendar proposed in NMAC 6.10.5 — in particular, the extension of mandated instructional days for students to 180 and the addition of as many of 10 professional development days for teachers on top of that,

As was discussed in a recent *Santa Fe New Mexican* article, 86% of Capital students are chronically absent (defined as missing 10% or more of instructional time). Our problem with instructional days is not a shortage of school days; it's finding ways to encourage students to attend instructional days that are already scheduled. While some of the causes of chronic absenteeism at Capital are no doubt complex social problems (the trappings of poverty, lack of adequate transportation, etc.), there are immediate steps that could be taken to reduce absenteeism, such as cutting or reducing the availability of programs that incentivize students to miss school by providing an easy way to earn credit without attending class (E2020, credit by exam).

Even more so than increasing the number of instructional days, I am against adding designated PD days to the school calendar. Again, we need to make more of the PD days we already have, not add more. Most of our existing PD fails to provide meaningful learning opportunities for teachers that could plausibly translate into better learning experiences for our students in the classroom. What would help teachers create better learning experiences for our students would be (a) focusing our existing PD time on learning about or practicing instructional strategies and techniques, rather than on ensuring teacher compliance with new grading policies (SBG) or dealing with the myriad technical problems that have emerged as a result of these new grading policies; and (b) dedicating more of our existing PD time to allowing teachers to work independently to apply these instructional strategies and techniques in ways that work for them.

Thank you for hearing me out.

Sincerely,

David Delano
Social Studies Teacher
Capital High School
Santa Fe, New Mexico

From: [Joni Greer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed change for school calendar
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:03:27 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

I am a concerned mother of a child that attends a school within the Cobre School District. Cobre Consolidated Schools benefit from a calendar with 162 student days, a schedule that has served our community well. However, the proposed changes would impact our district in a negative way.

Also the proposed change lacks support from research, which consistently shows that increased instructional time alone does not guarantee improved student outcomes.

Please reconsider this proposal.

Joni Greer
575-654-5823
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Shawna Skinner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:20:02 AM

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I have been a NM educator for almost 25 years. Your purposed change to the length of a school year is concerning. You are not considering the individual circumstances of each district and are trying to take away our autonomy. More days is not what we need. What we need are more supportive state administrators who ask what they can do to help us be better, not mandate. Those of you in Santa Fe are not in the classroom every day. In fact, I wonder how many of those making the decisions have ever been in the classroom.

Attendance will not improve if more days are added, it will actually have the opposite effect. We already have issues with the kids that need to be here not attending regularly and adding days will not help. What we need are those families to prioritize education and be more supportive of their child in the classroom. In my 4-day school week district, the data shows we have better performing students than some 5-day districts. This is a matter of quality over quantity. More is not always better. Part of the reason we do well is because of smaller class sizes and schools with a 4-day week are typically rural with less students. Teacher retention will also be affected in my district.

Most of the educators, support staff, and administrators I know are hardworking individuals who care about kids. But burnout is a real epidemic in education that will only get worse with a huge overhaul of the calendar. We already have a shortage in this state, why make an already significant problem worse? And why are we trying to fix something that isn't broken? The problems faced in Albuquerque and Santa Fe and not the problems we see on this side of the state. Please stop trying to lump us all together. Different strategies work for different students. Let us maintain our autonomy so we can do what's best for our group of students.

Shawna Skinner
Floyd Municipal Schools

From: [MELANIE STOKES](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Urgent Opposition Against Extended School Year
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:45:57 AM

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Good Day,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing you as a dedicated educator and administrator with a deep commitment to the well-being and success of both teachers and students. I must express my strong opposition to the proposed extension of the school year.

Prolonging the academic calendar has proven to be counter productive, leading to teacher burnout and student fatigue. It exacerbates existing challenges rather than addressing them. The toll this takes on the quality of education is undeniable.

Should this initiative proceed, I, along with several colleagues, will be compelled to explore alternative career opportunities. The teacher shortage in New Mexico will not be alleviated by overburdening those already in service. If our essential time off is compromised, it only makes sense to seek fulfilling employment elsewhere.

The NEA, the Governor and many others have struggled hard to get pay raises in sync with the cost of living as well as keep our work week and year within reasonable limits. This amendment will disrespect those gains and cause us to fall behind yet again.

Have any of you been in a classroom with students lately to see what really goes on? The disrespect that teachers receive from students and parents is unbelievable. Somewhere down the line all of you have to figure out there is also a disconnect with parents. If we do not have supportive parents then all we can do is keep trying but not keep adding hours to the calendar.

Our school system here in Clovis is based on data. I would like to see the data that would prove that adding more hours would benefit the students. I am not convinced that it would benefit, I only see that it would hinder students' attendance.

--

Thank you,
Melanie Stokes
Los Ninos Early Intervention/NM Pre-K
Assistant Principal
(575) 769-4545

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From: [Hampton Burnette](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Feedback
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:53:35 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing my feedback on the proposed rule changes through NMAC 6.10.5. I am a bit shocked by this proposed change and am very curious about the reasoning behind it and the supportive documents that such a change would be beneficial to students. I am also concerned about the NMPED taking local control from the school boards in this decision. As this proposed change stands with the 180-day mandate that does not take into account all the stakeholders across the state, I am strongly opposed to this rule change.

This change takes the thought process that more is better for students, but this is not always the case. The problem schools are facing will just be exacerbated. More days with huge class sizes and less teacher planning time will not be beneficial for students.

Many schools across the state have benefited from the flexible instructional hours to create 4 day school weeks that have been very beneficial to their students. It has also given teachers more planning time having that 5th day off, because, lets face it, a one-hour planning time a school day isn't enough for teachers to plan and create engaging lessons for students, grade papers, PLC, participate in training, etc.

I am curious to hear the reasonings for this proposed change and I hope they will listen to all of the feedback given to this.

Thank you for your time,

Hampton Burnette
A Proud NM Educator

From: [Bernadina Aguilar](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No five day school week
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:56:20 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I oppose the statewide proposal to shift from a four day school week to a five day week. I oppose simply because gas prices are high and with a five day school week it's more money everyone has to spend to get back and forth. With our four day school week we have time to take care of our animals, set our doctors appointments so we don't miss school, sports would change. Currently, our sports teams' competitions are scheduled on Fridays so that instructional time is not lost. Everything we do on Fridays, like work and family time, would change and attendance would also be impacted for those who are sick or have important things to do. I feel a five day school week would not be a good idea.

Sincerely,

Bernadina Aguilar

From: [Hailey Simmerman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:56:40 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I do not agree with the shift from a four-day week to a five-day week. The reason I do not agree with this is because It's not fair to the kids who would have to ride the bus more than they already have to. We live in a rural area so this is especially hard for students living an hour and a half away from the school. Following this, having to drive to the bus stop uses so much gas, I couldn't imagine having to drive an extra day. Driving to the bus stop is already almost 80 miles altogether each week. I do not want to add another day to the gas that's already expensive. This creates a hardship for families in our area. Overall going to school 5 days a week with the same amount of hours is not a beneficial idea.

Sincerely, Hailey Simmerman from Quemado High School

From: [Medley, Shane](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Brogan Medley](#); [Gilbert Guadiana](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] *Public Comment* NMAC 6.10.5 Proposed Amendment
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:00:24 PM

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NM PED,

Myself and my family are strongly opposed to the proposed amendment to NMAC 6.10.5 that would force a 5 day school week. I have 2 children that live and go to public school in SW NM. We get by with a lot less than the metropolitan areas out here in rural NM. This is a sense of pride for us, especially when we get to travel up north and beat sports teams from the districts who have proportionally more resources than we do.

We see where NM ranks for child wellbeing and education just like you do. Can you really say with a straight face that more exposure to the current public school system is going to be an improvement? I'm relieved every Friday when my middle school daughter doesn't have school because it's one less day of exposure to debauchery, drugs, and other negative energy.

Like you all probably do, I think to myself often about the things I can do to better the experience for my own kids and kids in my rural community. Please continue to allow this decision to be made at the local school board level. Our culture has been negatively affected enough by people in metropolitan NM who don't understand us. I understand that in today's sociopolitical climate that we're supposed to be preparing our kids to understand inequity, injustice, privilege, acceptance of strange gender trends, etc. I ask that the NM PED please check its own privilege and not assume that what works in the big city is right for rural NM.

Please do away with the proposed amendment all together.

Thanks,

Shane Medley

From: [Tristan Leyba](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose Statewide Shift to Five-Day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:02:09 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I support the option for schools to retain a four-day school week. With Quemado being such a remote town, most students are already exhausted from the four-day week. They have chores to do, whether it's feeding animals or cleaning animal pens because they live on a ranch or even gathering cattle. Living in a rural location encompasses a different lifestyle that requires students to utilize skills that people in the city wouldn't normally think about using. Most students are usually doing chores until nine-thirty at night. Another reason that students utilize the four-day week is because some have jobs. They could be paying bills like their phone or if they have their vehicle, they are sometimes paying for their fuel. I need my phone for communication between my boss and myself because he may need me to deliver some parts or drive a service rig to a job site.

Total costs for the school itself would increase tremendously as the bus routes take forty-five minutes to an hour to drop off kids at their bus stops, basic maintenance for the restrooms, power costs for keeping the lights on, the cost of propane to keep the heaters running, and costs for the sports division would all increase as some students participate in those activities. Overall, costs to families and schools would increase and would be detrimental to the hardworking lifestyle that some students choose to live. It's also going to decrease the amount of family time that students and their parents have together.

Thank you,
Tristan Leyba

From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:18:44 PM

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Dear Gentlemen/Ladies:

This letter is in reference to the proposal to eliminate 4-Day school weeks in New Mexico schools. This is a bad idea that has not been thought out by the PED. Here is why:

-- PED has not presented any research-based evidence to indicate that 5 Days is more effective than 4 Days in improving student outcomes. 4 Day Schools still have the same number of instructional hours as a 5 Day School. As a veteran teacher who has taught under both models, I maintain that the 4 Day Schools are just as effective, if not more effective, than 5 Day schools.

-- Teacher recruiting and retention is a REAL issue in small, rural school districts. Some teachers currently drive 45 minutes (or more) to get to and from Hondo. It is difficult to recruit teachers to travel such a distance to work -- but having a 4 Day Week makes it appealing.

-- I predict a major crisis in the availability of teachers and staff if 5 Day School weeks are mandated for the rural districts.

I am asking you to reconsider this proposal and look for research-based evidence from the many other states that have successfully implemented (as we have) the 4 Day Week.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Martin
Special Education Coordinator
Hondo Valley Public Schools

From: [May, Rick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); [Constantine, Consuelo, PED](#)
Cc: [ryan@laneforliberty.com](#); [Nibert, Greg](#); [gail@gailfornewmexico.com](#); [Randall Pettigrew](#) ; [Montoya, Rod](#); [Jim Townsend](#); [Jack Chatfield](#); [Jim Townsend \(jamesgtownsend@gmail.com\)](#); [Joshua Hernandez](#) ; [JasonHarperNM](#); [John Block \(john@johnform.com\)](#); [Jenifer Jones \(jenifermariejones@gmail.com\)](#); [Mark Duncan](#); [Luis Terrazas](#); [Larry Scott](#); [Brian Baca](#); [Bill Rehm@comcast.net](#); [Alan Martinez](#); [andrea@reeblaw.org](#); [Ezzell, Candy S.](#); [Cathrynn Brown](#); [Jimmy Mason \(jimmymason1950@gmail.com\)](#); [Harlan Vincent \(harlan@harlanvincent.com\)](#); [Tanya Mirabal-Moya \(tanyamirabalmoya@gmail.com\)](#); [stefanilord2@gmail.com](#); [Stefani Lord](#); [Martine Zamora](#); [Hedin, Ryan](#); [Matthew Garcia-Sierra](#)
Subject: Public Comments form the House Republican Caucus Regarding the Proposed Rule Mandating 180 School Days of Instruction
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:29:18 PM
Attachments: [House Republican Caucus Comments on Proposed PED Rule on 180 Days of Instruction.pdf](#)

Mr. Secretary:

At the direction of the House Republican Leadership, I am attaching public comments from the entire 25-member House Republican Caucus. These signed comments express opposition to the proposed rule that would mandate 180 days of school instruction which, in turn, will eliminate the ability of school districts to continue and/or implement the popular 4-day school week which has been successful across the state, especially in rural New Mexico.

Please include these public comments in the public hearing record.

Thank you for your consideration of the Caucus' views on this important matter. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Rick May

Rick May
Policy Director
House Republican Leadership Office
State Capitol, Room 125
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
(505) 986-4761 office



State of New Mexico
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Santa Fe

December 7, 2023

Dr. Arsenio Romero
Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Subject: Opposition to Mandate of 180 Days of School Instruction

Dear Secretary Romero:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to any effort by the Public Education Department (PED) to mandate through an administrative rule 180 days of instruction in all New Mexico public schools. Further, we respectfully request that you consider the research and arguments provided below to decide against pursuing such an administrative rule. While we fully understand and appreciate the importance of education and the desire to improve student outcomes, we believe this mandate may overlook crucial aspects of this issue that will negatively impact a student's success.

First, it is widely acknowledged by researchers and education experts that the family is the greatest indicator of student success. Numerous studies consistently demonstrate that parental involvement and support play a vital role in a child's academic performance. Implementing more mandated days and hours will not necessarily lead to improved outcomes if we fail to address comprehensively the existing chronic absenteeism problem. Studies show a direct correlation between absenteeism rates and lower academic achievement. Therefore, it is imperative that we focus on tackling chronic absenteeism and employ strategies to improve student attendance before considering additional mandates. In other words, we should prioritize efforts to engage families in their child's education, thus fostering an environment that is conducive to learning both at school and at home.

Moreover, we would like to draw your attention to the unique challenges faced by small districts with limited funding, specifically those in rural communities. These districts often rely heavily on agriculture, which demands extra labor during specific seasons. By implementing four-day school weeks in these rural areas, we can effectively support our agricultural producers, many of whom are educators as well, while avoiding additional burdens on financially stressed small districts. This innovative approach has been successfully adopted in numerous rural communities, leading to increased teacher retention, reduced transportation costs, and improved overall efficiency.

In conclusion, while we acknowledge the importance of providing quality education to every student, we would like to express our opposition to any mandate of 180 days of school instruction. Instead, we urge you to consider the crucial role of the family in student success, prioritize addressing chronic absenteeism, and provide enhanced opportunities for local districts to improve student outcomes based

on their unique situations. By doing so, we can achieve better outcomes for our students while mitigating the challenges faced by small districts.

Thank you for considering our perspective, and we kindly request that you take these points into account during your deliberations. We are confident that by adopting a holistic approach to education, we can ensure the success and well-being of our students.

Respectfully yours,



T. Ryan Lane
Republican Leader District 3



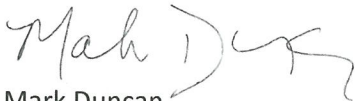
Greg Nibert
Republican Whip District 59



Gail Armstrong
Republican Caucus Chair District 49



John Block
State Representative District 51




Mark Duncan
State Representative District 2



Randall T. Pettigrew
State Representative District 61



Luis M. Terrazas
State Representative District 39



Larry R. Scott
State Representative District 62



James G. Townsend
State Representative District 54



Jenifer Jones
State Representative District 32



Candy Spence Ezzell
State Representative District 58



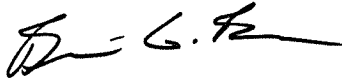
Alan T. Martinez
State Representative District 23



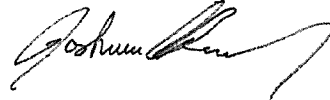
Martin Zamora
State Representative District 63



Rod Montoya
State Representative District 1



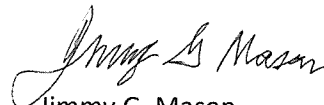
Brian G. Baca
State Representative District 8



Josh N. Hernandez
State Representative District 60



William R. Rehm
State Representative District 31



Jimmy G. Mason
State Representative District 66



Andrea Reeb
State Representative District 64



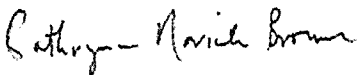
Harlan Vincent
State Representative District 56



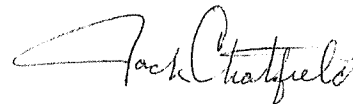
Tanya Mirabal Moya
State Representative District 7



Jason C. Harper
State Representative District 57



Cathrynn N. Brown
State Representative District 55
Page 5



Jack Chatfield
State Representative District 67



Stefani Lord
State Representative District 22

From: [Cheryl Haase](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: actt@atfunion.org; act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:36:56 PM

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Dear PED Staffer,

I have been teaching since 1984 in many school districts, and I have never seen such an arbitrary and capricious ruling about my working conditions as your proposal to increase mandated instructional days to 180, without including professional development, parent teacher conferences, etc. HB 130 was just passed in 2023, which has already increased the school year. Why would you circumvent the legislative process?

My colleagues and I urge you to drop this proposed change. I am concerned that we will lose good teachers and other staff over due to this "gotcha" proposal.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Haase
Grant Middle School

From: [Kathryn Taft](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requiremnets
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:59:10 PM

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To Whom it May Concern:

I feel that your move to add more instructional school days to our school calendar undermines the law HB 130 that just passed in 2023. To suggest this change shows your lack of accountability to your employees and a blatant disregard of the previously enacted law.

--

Kathryn Taft

6th grade Math Teacher

6th grade Social Studies Teacher

Grant Middle School

(505)299-2113 ext. 30588

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From: [Randall Lackey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] staff shortages
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:10:08 PM

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We will lose a ton of staff, some to retirement, some to other professions. Rural districts will lose teachers to bigger districts. Our rural district has half the staff coming from out of district to teach in our 4 day week.

From: [Shawna Carter](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule protest letter
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:14:27 PM

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

To whom it may concern:

I am an educator currently in my 15th contract as a high school teacher. I have worked in New Mexico schools with five day work weeks, and I currently work in the Cloudcroft Municipal Schools with a four day week. In my prior experience with a five day school week, there is little to no time outside of school hours to accommodate extracurricular activities that connect learning inside the classroom to meaningful experiences. Students compartmentalize their learning and test scores diminish due to lack of clear connections between what is learned inside the classroom and the real world.

In my current four day week, students are able to make important connections between learned material and the real world due to an extra day outside of school hours. They are able to participate in clubs, volunteer in the community, and gain practical experience that connects to the things they learn during school hours. The four day week is critical for these connections to be made and a five day week would decrease the opportunity for students to gain these essential skills.

Staff is a limited resource in a small school. Many of us, including myself, teach multiple courses and sponsor clubs/activities outside of regular school hours. Having an additional day to prepare for these courses and hold club meetings is necessary to the success of these activities. Without the four day school week, these clubs and courses would not be feasible, and many of them would dissolve due to a lack of participation and time.

Recently, I finished my Masters of Science in Educational Leadership. As part of my degree, I performed a study centered around the importance of STEM programs/CTE courses and extracurricular clubs. I found that these extracurricular activities and classes improve SAT scores and overall performance inside the classroom.

Our school is in the top tier of schools in the state. As my research demonstrated, one of the reasons we are performing well is directly related to the variety and availability of clubs CTE classes and activities. Removing these clubs and courses would be detrimental to the success of our school and students.

In Cloudcroft, our school culture is deeply rooted in our community. Many of our students live in poverty and utilize the longer weekend to earn money. Their paychecks help pay family expenses and are essential to the survival of the family unit. Without this extra pay,

many families will not be able to make ends meet. As a result, the four day week has become an essential part of our community's culture and economy. An increase in required school days would also create unnecessary stress on students and families.

Since we are a small village, there is limited availability of space to hold community meetings and gatherings. Many of our local community members utilize our facilities during the longer weekend to hold events. By requiring a five day school week, our community will no longer be able to utilize our facilities, and our relationship with these important organizations will weaken.

My final arguments against the change in policy are personal. On paper, teachers seem paid well. However, I pay twice as much as an average New Mexican to have health insurance through the NMPSIA. I pay into a retirement plan that is not optional, and our recent increase in pay has bumped me into the next tax bracket. When all is said and done, I am receiving less than half of my contracted pay.

Since I commute each day, I use my own limited funds to maintain my vehicle, and Cloudcroft is one of the lowest paid districts in the state. Why would I continue to commute when all of the perks of a small school district are stripped away? I enjoy our smaller school and a four day week combined with a strong connection to the community were the primary reasons I came to this school district.

Additionally, the four day week allows me to make important appointments outside of school hours. Many facilities are not open on the weekends. Having a five day week would require me to take time off and away from my classroom. In my classroom, important instructional time would be lost, and due to a lack of substitute teachers, additional strain would be placed on my colleagues when they are asked to help cover classes. My positive relationship with my students and peers has been strengthened through my presence in the classroom and on campus. A five day week has the potential to strain these relationships through unnecessary stress associated with absences for appointments necessary to maintain my personal health.

As a parent of a student who attends the Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, I worry about my son. Previously, he attended a school with a five day week. His mental health, self esteem, and confidence were low. After switching to a five day week to a four day week, his mental health has improved along with his feeling of accomplishment and self worth. He utilizes his time outside of school to explore, make meaningful connections to his learning and expand his personal interests. A five day week would be a step backward for many students, like my son, who need time outside of school to reset and rest.

Please reconsider the mandatory five day school week. This policy change would be detrimental to small schools like Cloudcroft. Our students and community are dependent on

the four day week for our livelihood and the programs we have in place.

--

Shawna Carter

CHS Math

CHS Systems Go

CHS BEST Robotics



From: [Arianna Meza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED 180DAY CALENDAR
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:25:20 PM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Arianna Meza, I am 26 years old, and I am a parent to a beautiful 4-year-old girl and 2-year-old boy. I am not only a proud employee of Texico Municipal schools, but I am also a part of generations that have been through this school. I grew up here, attended school here and currently still live in Texico with my two children. My two older brothers graduated from here and my mom retired from Texico Schools, not to mention all my extended family, cousins and uncles who have also attended and graduated and sent their children here. Now my first born is attending our PreK. To say Texico Schools is just a job would be an understatement. It is family.

Ignorance is defined as the lack of knowledge or information. Nescient is defined as lacking knowledge. Unconstitutional is defined as not in accordance with a political constitution, within the US constitution or with procedural rules.

These words amongst insufficient investigation, scant research, and deficiency of study are all considered when describing that NMPED is proposing that ALL schools become 5-day week schools and that our calendar go to a 180-day calendar. Attempting to enforce this rule by inserting language that does not exist in the New Mexico Statute, and exerting authority that is not theirs to exert. When a department's power and potential to infringe our local autonomy in this manner becomes UNCIVILIZED.

I could understand if the NMPED could bring forth the research and documentation that provides PROOF that a 180-day calendar positively affects our students, our future generation, mentally, emotionally but most importantly EDUCATIONALLY, then the rest of us could have remotely a possibility of being on board with this proposal. However, creating a proposal JUST BECAUSE YOU WANT TO or because it benefits a personal gain is a juvenile ploy, frivolous and outright pointless.

Taking into consideration the already shortage of teachers within schools, this proposal is a sure way to push experienced vet teachers to retire or push for early retirement. Not only, are you now pushing out teachers who love their job, you are now creating a gap between the younger work force (which is practically nonexistent now due to money being thrown about haphazardly but that is a topic for a different, disappointing discussion) who has a desire to work within the public school system, such as myself, turn into a desire to build a different career path.

You are now trying to put a gap into a school who is the ranked best school district in NM. Instead of messing up a blue-ribbon school, why don't we try to pull ideas from what is working and applying to the schools that are in dire need of help.

For people in these positions, claiming to care about their citizens and the future of our state. You sure have a great way of continuing to ruffle the feathers of law-abiding citizens who want nothing but the best for their people and community and schools who are like family.

The rules in which I am addressing are as follows:

- The Public School Code (22-2-8.1) only specifies a minimum number of instructional hours, NOT a minimum number of instructional days.
- Section 22-2-8.1 of state law also clearly indicates that a portion of the instructional hours may be "professional work hours," but the proposed regulations require that the new minimum number of days be "exclusive of teacher professional work hours," meaning that staff training would have to be IN ADDITION TO the 180 school days
- The Public School Finance Act (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 otherwise authorized by statute.

Good luck and God bless you because you clearly need it.
-Arianna

From: [Hannah Dean](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:41:58 PM

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Dear NMPED,

My name is Hannah Dean. I currently serve as the secretary for the Cloudcroft Schools Parent Teacher Organization, and my daughter, Stevie, has attended Cloudcroft Schools beginning in Kindergarten through her current tenure as a Second Grader. We have had a wonderful experience with the entirety of the school staff and teachers, who are dedicated and kind, helping my once struggling student become a fluent and enthusiastic reader and straight-A student.

The current NMPED proposal (6.10.5 NMAC) 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 four-day school schedule will strain our already burdened rural school budget that serves many surrounding areas. It's my belief that the four-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.

If NMPED is concerned with meeting welfare and childcare needs, increasing funding for after-school care and YWCA programs, especially in rural areas, would be welcome alternatives to the five-day school proposal. Creating a five-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.

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.

Thank you for your consideration, and please reach out if you have any questions or further concerns.

Sincerely,

Hannah Dean

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sara Lark](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change Feedback
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:42:51 PM

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December 7, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing with concerns regarding the proposed changes your proposing in Title 6. Chapter 10. Part 5. Section 8, (C)- 1,2,3.

The first rule I would like to address is 6.10.5.8.

Section C.

Rule 1. This rule states all public school calendars shall include at least 180 instructional days per school year, exclusive of teachers' professional work hours.

Rule 2. All public schools shall schedule more than fifty percent of school weeks as five-day school weeks, and

Rule 3. All public schools shall be deemed to operate on five-day school weeks for the purposes of K-12 plus program funding calculations in Section 9 of this rule.

These proposed changes add thirty days to the school calendar year and require that my child attend school five days a week. My child attends Des Moines Municipal School. This school is currently ranked in the top 10% for reading, math, and science within the state, meeting all proficiencies and guidelines while performing on 150 calendar school days and going with a hybrid learning system of attendance required on some Fridays. If this school system meets all guidelines, adding 30 days within a school year and requiring five days a week seems ludicrous. My child is young, and adding extra days will shorten their attention and create fatigue, leading to ineffective learning. And although he is not yet in sports, for the older children at the school, adding more hours and days will strain these kids trying to juggle school and extracurricular activities. In addition to education, these children travel from ranches and other smaller towns surrounding Des Moines and Union County, creating an added burden to parents who must travel to bring their children to school. Considerations should also be made when adding hours increases the school district's cost.

Your proposed changes are a blanketed response to what needs to be addressed locally in those schools that are not meeting the standards. Work with those schools that are struggling! But these changes will create a burden for me and my family. I am a family nurse practitioner in Raton; we chose to drive our child to Des Moines due to the quality of the school system. I have had to cut my hours to transport my child 35 miles one way to school and to pick him up at the end of the day. Adding a day per week or 30 days total to the school year adds 4,200 extra miles a year to our travel time. Travel also increases costs for our family as no bus extends this far into Colfax County. In addition to cutting into my work schedule, it has also

affected my husband's work schedule and added pressure to juggling trying to arrange childcare for our other child.

Sincerely A Concerned Parent,

Sara Lark

From: [Dolores Altamirano](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed schedule
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:03:43 PM

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To whom it may concern;

As a parent of several children in the Cobre district, I do not support the proposed schedule to 5 day a week schooling for our children.

We as a district thrive on 4 day a week school calendar.

I do not support the new proposed .

Sincerely
Dolores Altamirano

From: [Kristy Ferguson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: extended school year
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:16:32 PM

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I am shocked to hear that PED is focusing another extension to school year. I do not support this action, and I know a majority of parents don't either. Adding MORE required hours to the school year is not going to fix the problem at hand. The solution to the education crisis in Albuquerque goes much deeper than expanding the school year; this is NOT the solution. Our children need to be taught the importance of education, and our teachers need to be trained on how to effectively teach at-risk kids. The current solution with the funding from the Governor of New Mexico, Michelle Lujan Grisham is to expand the school year by ten more days. However, by doing this it does not solve the underlying problem that our kids are not learning. What they need is to build a firm foundation of education. The days allotted should be sufficient, and our school systems need to be more efficient in using the days provided. Our children need to be taught what they need to do to be successful and want further their future education. Our teachers need more training on how to implement the required material at a level that our kids need to learn. Teachers and schools need to be invested in the education of our children who are not getting the educational foundation that they need at home, by providing more training for the teachers that extends into the summer while the kids are on break, allowing the teachers the opportunity to learn and grow each year to provide an education for our children that will secure their future.

I'm sure this is not new information to you, but according to an

article in *Education Week*, “This year, New Mexico finishes 50th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, with an overall score of 65.9 out of 100 points and a grade of D” (50th in the nation). This should be a major concern for the school systems in New Mexico. This is quite alarming to me that so many children are not learning what they need to be successful as contributing adults. The education in New Mexico is failing a large portion of our youth, and something needs to be done. The website *College Simply* reveals, “The University of New Mexico Main Campus which sent acceptance letters to 67% of the 11,457 students who applied and rejected 33%” (Colleges). According to the site, The University of New Mexico is rated, “moderate requirements” (Colleges) for the application process. This rating shows the standards are not extremely difficult to achieve. Imagine filling out a college application and getting the letter that you have not been accepted because your test scores were not high enough to be accepted. One-third of the applicants get this letter. It is possible that many who want to continue their education hit a dead end and become discouraged and may not continue to pursue to further their education. A possibility for this is they did not have a full understanding of what is needed to be done to get into college.

To help our children understand how important a college education is we need to start instilling it at the elementary level and continue into high school. We need to invest in their futures and make education a priority like many other states do. The schools need more accountability for the national low rating of a D. The *Albuquerque Journal* reported, “More than 100 Albuquerque Public Schools campuses were approved to participate in the new \$62 million extended learning time program this summer...But only a fraction of those that qualified will end up participating” (we threw millions). It is disappointing that our schools are

unwilling to take advantage of this funding by creating more training opportunities for teachers.

Providing extended summer training for the teachers would most benefit the students by cutting back on the time the teachers spend out of the classrooms. It would also take the money used for substitutes, while they are out of the classroom, and put it back into teachers' pockets. According to your website some of the funding will be used by adding, "80-hours of professional development for the staff throughout the year including five at the beginning of the school year" (Longer school year). However, removing the teachers from the classrooms for training during the year is not beneficial to the students, a substitute cannot teach them the way the teacher can. By extending teachers' contracts so that they do training outside of the school day, they will benefit from extra pay as well as additional training to provide much-needed guidance on how to successfully teach students in need. Some teachers argue that they don't want to extend their school year. Nonetheless, additional training will help teachers collaborate and learn what works and what doesn't so that they can adapt for the following year. Helping our teachers and schools understand what the kids need to learn is a small step into restoring our education in this state.

Many factors affect why our children struggle to grasp the importance of education. Some blame the lack of learning on poverty and that very well may be a contributing factor. However, if we start to build a foundation for the importance of education, we can help stop the cycle within the families. Families do play a very important role in education, but when they don't understand the importance of education themselves how can they support the kids? Our schools need to provide training for

teachers so that they can help children and families alike to understand how to rebuild the importance of education so that they can pass it on to future generations.

With the additional \$62 million in funding for our education, let's create accountability directly with the students. Right now, according to your website, the funding would be used by adding, "10 additional instructional days a year" (longer school year). Adding more school days will not fix the problem for all students. Additional time spent in school is not the solution for everyone. Many could benefit from additional time in school. An article on *New Mexico Voices for Children* points out, "Children who come from low-income families need more social support than do children from middle-and upper-income families." (Bradley) By using the additional funding to support the high-risk kids. We can reach those who need additional support. Some guidelines can be set to create expectations for the kids. If they are not met, additional school days will be needed to achieve the expectations. By doing this it will create more accountability for the students and push them to work harder during the school year. It will also create an action consequence situation and prepare them for life.

Restoring education in New Mexico will require lots of dedication from the schools, teachers, students, and families. For each of these areas to become successful in creating an environment to learn, additional support and training are necessary not adding additional days of school. Our schools need to know how to support families and teachers. Our teachers need ongoing training on how to create an environment for the kids to learn in and how to hold them accountable for their education. The students need to be held to a high level of accountability and have

rewards and consequences for their actions. Although it may not be possible to reach all families the availability of knowledge and support can help some of them. By creating the expectations and environments that students can be more successful in we can begin to rebuild our below standard education system in New Mexico.

Sincerely,

Kristy Ferguson

From: [Tina Chacon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:37:50 PM

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This is WRONG!! Listen to educators!

--

Tina Chacon
Counselor, M.A./M.S.
Eugene Field Elementary School
chacon_t@aps.edu

From: [Alicia Faulds](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:58:17 PM

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Good Afternoon,

I am reaching out to let you know that I do not agree with NM PED's proposed change to the current school calendar that will call for 180 instructional days NOT to include PD and other necessary school activities such as parent teacher conferences. APS has just gone through a VERY disruptive calendar and school day time change that has affected all education stakeholders; I believe more disruptive than the PED probably understands. Please do not force us to change the school calendar again. The entire legislative body voted on the current rule, please do not circumvent this action.

Thank you for your time,

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For a mental health emergency, contact your private provider or [The New Mexico Crisis and Access Line](#), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-855-662-7474. For life-threatening emergencies, please dial [911](#).

Alicia Faulds, M.A., LMHC
School Counselor ECA/CEC
807 Mountain Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM
Cell: (505) 967-9525 (preferred)
Office: (505) 247-3658 Ext. 45595
[Ms. Alicia's Counseling Webpage](#)

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From: [Kimberlee Bloemker](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:06:34 PM

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Good Afternoon,

I am emailing in response to your upcoming vote to change the terms of House Bill 130. When this Bill was passed, less than a year ago, it was with the understanding that the 1140 hours would include some PD hours. For you to go back and try to change those terms is not only unfair but unethical. It is like changing the rules of the game once the game has started without consulting any of the players. I work in an elementary school and even my students know that is not okay. Why is the PED circumventing the actual intent of the Bill that was passed by the Legislature? When do you expect PD to happen? Quality education must include ongoing quality staff development. Your plan to change the rules to all 1140 hours being in the classroom will prevent that PD from happening. Thus hurting our educational system, not helping it.

I recall that when the current changes were announced, the majority of your stakeholders were upset. (Educators, Parents, Students, Community members) As a result you saw many people leave the education field and many parents opt to homeschool. Why are you trying to force a repeat of that situation? I am sure you are aware of the shortage of qualified staff in the schools. This reckless decision will only serve to exacerbate this shortage. I hope you rethink this and take some time to actually consult with the people that will be impacted.

I look forward to your reply.

--

Kim Bloemker
She/Her/Hers
Professional School Counselor
Griegos Elementary School
Office# (505)345-3661 Ext 55906
[GES Counseling Website](#)

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline



Amazing things happen when you try!-

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From: [Maria Crump](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day School Week
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:21:11 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am an educator in Cloudcroft and I am writing to help you understand how detrimental moving to a five day week would be to our very successful little school. We live in a rural community where many, many of our students hold down jobs to help support their families. Taking a day of work from them would be an economic nightmare for them. Our graduation rate will go down, because students will quit school to keep their jobs.

As teachers, we wear many hats. Working in the Cloudcroft district means many hours of donated time given to make sure that students have the best education that they can get. We offer so many extra-curricular activities and teachers are already worn thin, but usually have a Monday to prepare lessons, grade and take care of personal appointments. Taking this day away will cause some teachers to walk away, because . This would be a huge loss of experienced teachers. Sure you can get new, less experienced teachers, but I thought our goal was to increase our scores and do what was best for our students. Maybe it would save money for the state, maybe that is the plan. Why is it that you can't see that we have a great thing going in Cloudcroft? We in Cloudcroft know what is best for our students in Cloudcroft. We do not need some distant and unrelated group of people to make our local choices for us. Let the record speak for itself. Why would you want to implement plans that would hinder and sabotage all of the hard work that we have put into making our community and our school one of the best. Why do you want to dictate for our school what is best when we are obviously very capable of making those decisions for our students and community, and we have a track record to show for it. Our School Board, our teachers, our students, our administration and our community are together in this. You are making dictatorial, bad choices in forcing this plan on all schools. These decisions should be made by the people with "boots on the ground", who make it happen every day, us.

Thank you,
Maria Crump

From: [Deandra Romero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mesa Vista Consolidated School Calendar
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:33:14 PM

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To whom it may concern,

As a parent of a child who attends Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools it has come to my attention that there is a possibility of the academic calendar being changed. From my perspective it is very important to note that this change would be very unnecessary. The reason for putting my daughter in Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools is because of there high rating education that they provide the students which I feel has been very successful with the current local school board and academic year calendar. I feel that there should be no change to this calendar as Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools is on the top of the list for education. It is important to note that our local board is doing a great job and has been for several years, there is absolutely no reason to intervene as Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools serves a tight nit community that is happy with the leaders we have.

I hope that this message finds you in good spirits and lets you all take the time to really think about the impact it could have on Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools students, parents, faculty, and staff in the long run.

Please feel free to reach out to me for any questions or concerns.

All the best,
Deandra Romero, BBA

From: [Fabiola Torres](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:34:15 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: [Margaret Ferranti](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose Statewide Shift from Four Day Week to Five Day
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:13:10 PM

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

12/6/23

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in regard to the proposed statewide shift from a four day week to a five day week. I am very much opposed to this idea for a number of reasons.

As a teacher at a small rural school in Quemado, I firmly believe that shifting to a five day week would negatively impact us because of increased costs, both transportation and overhead, increased teacher burnout, increased student time on buses, increased absenteeism and decreased family time.

Living and working in a rural community looks very different from living and working in an urban setting. Many of our students live on ranches and have obligations on the weekends such as feeding livestock, chopping firewood, breaking ice in the wintertime and other tasks of this type depending on the time of year. A five day week makes helping out at home difficult. Ranching is a way of life and not only provides a livelihood, but also instills a strong work ethic in our young people. If students are in school on Fridays, their families will have to hire additional people at certain times of the year to help out.

Costs would be increased because of running buses five days a week as opposed to only four, the utility costs would go up, extra food would have to be purchased, there would be incurred costs for non-salaried staff. Attendance would be affected because sporting events are currently scheduled on Fridays and if there is school on Friday, the athletes would be gone for away games. In a school as small as ours, athletes generally make up over half of each class and if they are gone, the non-athletes lose instructional time because of teachers having to go over the lesson for that Friday again on Monday when the athletes are back in school. As it stands, attendance isn't severely impacted by sporting events because they generally occur on Fridays when there is no school or afterschool on Thursdays.

In regard to instructional time, it is based on hours, not days. Since we meet the required number of instructional hours, adding another day doesn't help students. Furthermore, because of the distance that many students and staff have to travel, shorter days don't work. It doesn't make sense to shorten the school day by an hour or so but increase the number of days that students have to attend. The extra day puts an extra burden on our families to transport their children. Even with the bus routes, many of our families still have to travel 20+ miles one way to the bus stop. Many families live well below the poverty level in Catron County and requiring them to spend more money for one more day is unfair. In addition, there is legislation currently in place that states that it is discretionary for school districts to decide whether or not to attend four days or five days.

In a small school such as ours, each teacher is responsible for six different classes each day, which translates to six separate preps. If another day is added, that just puts that much

more on teachers. There is already a significant amount of teacher burnout and I believe that this would push even more teachers out of the profession.

These are some of the reasons I am opposed to the proposed statewide shift from a four day week to a five day week. I implore you to please consider the decision very carefully and take into account the fact that the issues that face rural schools are very different from the issues schools in Albuquerque, Santa Fe or Las Cruces face. Our state does not fit into the "one size fits all" category. What may be good for Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Las Cruces is probably not good for the rest of the state where schools vary greatly in size.

Sincerely,

Margaret Ferranti
Quemado High School
Quemado, NM

From: [Crystal Baldwin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:13:34 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 name is Crystal Baldwin and I am a teacher and mother. I have worked in the public school system for almost 20 years. My children go to a public charter school and they are in kindergarten and 4th grade.

I have watched each year as rules come down and get set in schools and classrooms. Most of these rules and things set upon teachers make no sense. Most of these rules do not keep into account what children actually need. The new hours were brought down for this school year and it has been awful. I teach kindergarten. Asking a child, a 5-6 year old child, to be in school this amount of time is not only burning them out, it is not developmentally appropriate. Where is your data that more time equals better education? Children should be playing, they should be with their families, they should be doing developmentally appropriate things. I spend the majority of my day with behaviors and consoling students about missing their parents because they are in school for such a big amount of time. I have kids falling asleep because the day is so long. It's NOT appropriate!

I took my own kids out of APS because of the hour changes and school days. I put them in a charter school that goes 4 days a week. The difference the 4 day vs 5 makes is huge. Students are happier, teachers are happier. We have less breaks than APS, we started a week later and get out a week before. Same amount of hours as APS, but it is more manageable. The days are long, especially with kindergarteners, but they know the three days off is soon and time to recover.

What data shows that 180 days is the magic number? Why aren't we taking a page from a school district or state that is doing well in education? Why aren't we holding parents more accountable for attendance, tardiness, low performance, low test scores, behavior? Those are the things that will get us out of last place. I guarantee schools districts/states high in education do not go for this amount of time. You cannot put the entire load on teachers and have it be more through the day and more through the year. Do you know why teachers have summers "off"? Because you wouldn't have any teachers if they had to do this year round.

This is a big mistake! You have no real research or data to back this up. Students that can homeschool or go private are going to go. This much school is going to cause more of a teacher shortage. Working with kids is hard and stressful. We get zero help, support, breaks, and little pay. More time equals more time for kids to miss. That's it. Use this money to hire more support, use money to have a program for parents to understand school and hold them accountable, use this money to fund classrooms, use this money to have AC and heat in the buildings, NOT to have more time and days added.

If you don't believe how much of a negative impact the added time has had then I invite you to my classroom to see it first hand.

I beg you to listen and rethink what you are asking schools, teachers, and students to do.

Thank you,
Crystal Baldwin

From: [Emmalee Madison Allen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposal to mandate a minimum of 180 student days during the academic school year.
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:16:46 PM

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Dear New Mexico public Education Department,

I am a student at Mesa Vista High school. I have recently heard of your proposal for the 180 student school days in an academic school year. If this rule passes, our school will lose teachers who are essential to the education of myself, as well as my peers. If these teachers decide to retire due to the five day school week, our education levels will decrease immensely. My second concern about this proposal is; the amount of time spent at school, this brings down the amount of time students (and teachers) will see family at home. This comes with higher stress rates, and overall unhappiness. If the students are worn out by the five day school week, some may be unwilling to learn. This brings down the education rate, not bringing it up as you believe it will.

My third concern about this proposal is; Restriction of local governance. If you continue with this proposal it is possible that our school board will be extinguished, therefore not being able to make unique rules for us that are mandatory for the schools success.

I hope that you will see that the harm this proposal brings outweighs the good you think it will accomplish. I truly believe it is the best thing for my school, as well as everyone else in New Mexico.

Best Wishes,
Emma Allen

From: [Remington Drake](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for:
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:35:34 PM

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

Hello I am emailing you to address the Subject: Unite for Local Control of Mesa Vista Consolidated School Calendar. On my own personal opinion I don't think the students should have to attend or even have school on Friday because most of the kids have other activities outside of school such as jobs, personal events and so on.

Sincerely Remington drake these are just my personal opinions on why these kids should not have school on Friday and also why the school should have their own control.

From: [Shawna Carter](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 Proposed Rules
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:12:30 PM

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I am an educator currently in my 15th contract as a high school teacher. I have worked in New Mexico schools with five day work weeks, and I currently work in the Cloudcroft Municipal Schools with a four day week. In my prior experience with a five day school week, there is little to no time outside of school hours to accommodate extracurricular activities that connect learning inside the classroom to meaningful experiences. Students compartmentalize their learning and test scores diminish due to lack of clear connections between what is learned inside the classroom and the real world.

In my current four day week, students are able to make important connections between learned material and the real world due to an extra day outside of school hours. They are able to participate in clubs, volunteer in the community, and gain practical experience that connects to the things they learn during school hours. The four day week is critical for these connections to be made and a five day week would decrease the opportunity for students to gain these essential skills.

Staff is a limited resource in a small school. Many of us, including myself, teach multiple courses and sponsor clubs/activities outside of regular school hours. Having an additional day to prepare for these courses and hold club meetings is necessary to the success of these activities. Without the four day school week, these clubs and courses would not be feasible, and many of them would dissolve due to a lack of participation and time.

Recently, I finished my Masters of Science in Educational Leadership. As part of my degree, I performed a study centered around the importance of STEM programs/CTE courses and extracurricular clubs. I found that these extracurricular activities and classes improve SAT scores and overall performance inside the classroom.

Our school is in the top tier of schools in the state. As my research demonstrated, one of the reasons we are performing well is directly related to the variety and availability of clubs CTE classes and activities. Removing these clubs and courses would be detrimental to the success of our school and students.

In Cloudcroft, our school culture is deeply rooted in our community. Many of our students live in poverty and utilize the longer weekend to earn money. Their paychecks help pay family expenses and are essential to the survival of the family unit. Without this extra pay, many families will not be able to make ends meet. As a result, the four day week has become an essential part of our community's culture and economy. An increase in required

school days would also create unnecessary stress on students and families.

Since we are a small village, there is limited availability of space to hold community meetings and gatherings. Many of our local community members utilize our facilities during the longer weekend to hold events. By requiring a five day school week, our community will no longer be able to utilize our facilities, and our relationship with these important organizations will weaken.

My final arguments against the change in policy are personal. On paper, teachers seem paid well. However, I pay twice as much as an average New Mexican to have health insurance through the NMPSIA. I pay into a retirement plan that is not optional, and our recent increase in pay has bumped me into the next tax bracket. When all is said and done, I am receiving less than half of my contracted pay.

Since I commute each day, I use my own limited funds to maintain my vehicle, and Cloudcroft is one of the lowest paid districts in the state. Why would I continue to commute when all of the perks of a small school district are stripped away? I enjoy our smaller school and a four day week combined with a strong connection to the community were the primary reasons I came to this school district.

Additionally, the four day week allows me to make important appointments outside of school hours. Many facilities are not open on the weekends. Having a five day week would require me to take time off and away from my classroom. In my classroom, important instructional time would be lost, and due to a lack of substitute teachers, additional strain would be placed on my colleagues when they are asked to help cover classes. My positive relationship with my students and peers has been strengthened through my presence in the classroom and on campus. A five day week has the potential to strain these relationships through unnecessary stress associated with absences for appointments necessary to maintain my personal health.

As a parent of a student who attends the Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, I worry about my son. Previously, he attended a school with a five day week. His mental health, self esteem, and confidence were low. After switching to a five day week to a four day week, his mental health has improved along with his feeling of accomplishment and self worth. He utilizes his time outside of school to explore, make meaningful connections to his learning and expand his personal interests. A five day week would be a step backward for many students, like my son, who need time outside of school to reset and rest.

Please reconsider the mandatory five day school week. This policy change would be detrimental to small schools like Cloudcroft. Our students and community are dependent on the four day week for our livelihood and the programs we have in place.

--

Shawna Carter

CHS Math

CHS Systems Go

CHS BEST Robotics



From: [Ying Wang Wagner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 will get worse after your change
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:13:39 PM

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For some schools, your intended goal might get worse.

Your goal is the students' better educational outcome, you want to change all 4-day work to 5-day work.

For some rural schools which have a long-term problem of attracting quality teachers, your changing into 5-day will cause their existing teachers to call retirement and not be able to get quality teachers to replace them.

Your change will cause those schools to lose good teachers. So the education outcome will be WORSE.

My advice is to carefully review different school's situations to decide if to change the 4-day week.

From: anneliese_kvammefamily.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:17:01 PM

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To the New Mexico Public Education Department:

We, the members of the Teachers Association of Lordsburg-National Education Association, state that we are in opposition to the proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements, particularly the clause requiring all schools, regardless of location or circumstance, to operate on a five-day school week.

We believe that the students and staff of our district, Lordsburg Municipal Schools, have greatly benefitted by operating on a four-day school week. In the past six and a half years, since we adopted this schedule, we have seen a decrease in both student and staff absences, as well as higher student and staff morale. We believe these factors to be very influential in student achievement and highly qualified staff retention.

While we recognize that the four-day school week may not be appropriate for all districts, we also see that it has made a significant difference for Lordsburg Municipal Schools. Thus, we believe changing 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements, to require all districts, regardless of location or circumstance, to operate on a five-day school week would be detrimental to the teachers and students of New Mexico.

With this in mind, we ask you to consider allowing districts to maintain a four-day school week.

Thank you,
Teachers Association of Lordsburg-National Education Association

Anneliese Kvamme, President
Neomi Parra, Vice-President
Michelle Culberson, Treasurer

From: [Allyn Harad](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:31:37 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

Change the calendar to benefit education

If only someone from the PED would come to the schools and visit the classrooms to see

what we are experiencing everyday all year long.

If only the staff from PED would understand the changes in young people's lives require

different teaching.

If only PED would interview teachers and counselors and SPED teachers and the support

professionals, administrators that work with students all day, everyday to listen to our

frustrations and how we think education would work better.

If only PED would shift their mindset in the interest of the students.

If only PED would put students first to teach future generations life skills and to

teach young people how to run the state and the country as they become adults.

If only PED would stop labeling NM as one of the poorest states, and build our young people

and encourage our young people and honor the adults who work in the schools.

If only PED believed that students deserve healthy foods to eat, cooked on campus and not

wrapped in plastic containers; provide lessons in the arts, philosophy, sewing, electricity, plumbing,

building, road construction; accounting for all, parent 101, relationships 101, +.

If only PED would look at the data on absenteeism, maybe the rates are high because schools

are not meeting the needs of young people today?

If only PED would comprehend what students need today for their futures, and keep the calendar

accessible for teachers and families, and remember how a long break constitutes taking time to

reteach basic norms upon return. Longer days and longer contract days in the year is not

the answer, yet we voted on that last year and if only PED listened.

BOTTOM LINE: Listen to us. Better food for students. Better experiential experiences. Better opportunities for the students to learn. Better attitude like "Our Children are Growing and Learning. We are Accomplishing Great THings in our Schools" versus we are one of a few poor states regarding education, healthcare.

No more excuses. Find the money. Build our education to see success. Make New Mexico be a win:win state.

--

thank you,

Ms. Allyn Harad, M.A., M.A.
School Counselor - Safe Zone
Hodgin Elementary School
505.881.9855. x5

Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself and know

that everything in life has purpose. There are no mistakes, no coincidences, all events are blessings given

to us to learn from.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

Leo Buscaglio, an author and a professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Southern California.

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arrange for a return of the original documents. If you are the named recipient
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unauthorized person.**

From: [Chisum Hutton](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Statewide School Week Change
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:42:23 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

Hello, my name is Chisum Hutton, I am 11 years old and am a 6th grade student at Quemado ISD#2. I am writing in regards to the NMPED's proposal to the public about forcing a statewide change for all public schools. This change will affect my school and others that have a 4 day school week. One reason is that it would raise the time on a bus for some students, which means over 15 hours on a school bus each week! A second thing would be with a 5 day week, some things like appointments and activities would have to be cancelled. For me it would mean I would miss school because of Cross Country meets because most are scheduled on Fridays. This would also change the little funds my school has and it would raise the cost of diesel used by our school buses. Our water and electricity bills would be too much and we couldn't have sports or afternoon activities, like FFA or Mock Trial. Most schools that have great test scores and have great graduation rates follow a 4 day school week. My school has achieved a 98% 4 year graduation rate. Schools that have a 4 day school week are some of the best performing schools. My school ranks in the top 20% in reading, math and science proficiency. Lastly, I have some concerns about changing the New Mexican law. New Mexico Law 22-2-8.1 focuses on the instructional hours not days. New Mexico Law 22-8-23.14 authorizes 4 day and 5 day weeks, in turn departmental regulations cannot override statutory authorization. This statute has been working for many years in communities like the one where I live. Please do not change the way of life that my parents chose for me, which I love. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Chisum Hutton

From: [Marjorie O'Neill](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Additional PD Days
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:47:58 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

We do not need additional PD hours of days. We do not. You can keep tacking on the days, but we teachers are not the problem. We need to bring back truancy laws that are actually implemented. You can add on days, hours, and time, but if the kids aren't there what is the use? Why don't we have mandatory summer school for any student that fails core classes in middle school or elementary? Please stop the madness and quit adding days. Please!!!

Marjorie O'Neill
Middle School Teacher

From: [Scotney Blackburn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against NMPED's Proposed Change to HB130
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:18:52 PM

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

Honorable Kristina Ortez,

Thanks for being our state representative.

I am writing to protest the New Mexico Public Education Department's proposal to change House Bill 130. This bill spells out the requirement for a certain number of instructional hours and days in K-12 schools. Furthermore, the opening paragraph and lines 11-18 on page 4 both refer to schools with 4-days per week. However, it appears that the NM public education department is choosing to interpret this law as requiring 5-day school weeks for all schools in order to meet the total number of school hours.

This is disastrous for schools that already have instructional programs and staffing designed around a 4-day school week. I believe in reasonable government regulation, but this level of control interferes with talented educators' ability to manage their own school within the bounds of state limits that have already been set.

Both of my sons attend **Taos Integrated school of the Arts** where this proposed policy would upend the model of our school. As an NM Spotlight School, TISA has grown and thrived over the years. Besides top quartile academic performance, TISA has sported some of the best attendance in the State, plus during times that other schools in the areas had to rely on long-term subs due to a lack of formal, licensed teachers, TISA has placed fully licensed teachers in all classrooms and specials positions, thanks in part to the ability to operate under a 4-day work week. The 4-day week allows some staff to work 10-hour days, thus those staff can stay until 5 pm to supervise free aftercare for students.

The history of success at TISA clearly shows that a 4-day school week effectively supports the academic experience for our students and fosters a healthier work-life balance for our students, families, and staff. Studies show what we at TISA already know; a 4-day week provides for an extra day of individually structured enrichment or rest, providing students and teachers with more time to recharge and pursue professional development, extracurricular activities, relaxation, and family bonding. The 3-day weekend leads to improved social-emotional health, reduced stress, and

increased motivation and energy when returning to school on Mondays. Studies also show that a reduced school week can result in cost savings for both families and the school district due to reduced expenses for transportation, food services, and utilities.

Please help us ensure the continued success of the 4-day model by sharing your concerns and lack of support for changing HB130.

We stand against changing HB130 to require a 5-day school week, and as our Representative, we urge you to do the same.

I appreciate your time & efforts.

Thank you,

Sam and Scotney Blackburn

From: [Lori Cruz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 610.5 NAMC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 6:30:46 AM

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

I just heard about the proposed changes being proposed for the school calendar. I am totally opposed to these changes. Our rural kids are in school FAR too much longer than they need to be as it is and pretty soon our children will have NO home life whatsoever. That is already the problem with our society already is parents have to hand their kids over to someone else to take care of. DO NOT ALLOW THIS CHANGE TO HAPPEN.

From: [M. Goza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:42:47 AM

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

Greetings.

I am writing in strong opposition to a proposal to eliminate the four-day school week in New Mexico. One size does not fit all, and the legislature must acknowledge that there are many schools--especially small rural ones--in which the four-day week is absolutely the best fit.

I am a retired New Mexico elementary school teacher who worked most of my career in five-day districts, but my best years were in the four-day Hondo Valley district. The following are what I consider primary advantages of the four-day week:

1. Costs are reduced by schools using less energy when students and staff are present one less day. Transportation costs drop twenty percent.
2. There is more time for staff and individual professional development and for teachers to substantially upgrade lesson plans. When I was in Hondo, Fridays were when I planned hands-on activities to enrich classroom instruction.
3. The four-day week gave me and my students a greater sense of urgency--that time could not be wasted--and made us more efficient than we would have been in a five-day week.
4. Morale among students and staff were higher than I had seen in five-day districts where I had taught. People came in fresh on Monday mornings and ready to go to work. Their extra day away from school had allowed them to supplement income with part-time jobs, develop hobbies, work on school projects, and simply share more time with their families.
5. The Hondo district was able to recruit quality teachers and administrators from Roswell, Ruidoso, Capitan, and even Alamogordo (a seventy-five mile drive). These people had long commutes but were willing to do so when they required four days a week instead of five. This was largely responsible for a staff turnover rate in Hondo that was substantially lower than the five-day districts where I had worked.

Please allow the option of a four-day school week to continue. Many districts have demonstrated that--for them--it's clearly the best choice.

Mike Goza
111 S Slope Ct
Ruidoso, NM 88345
(575) 315-2494
mgoza66@gmail.com

From: [alisa burson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The 5 days or 4 days of school
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:47:22 AM

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I am a mother of three kids who attend Queamdo ISD and we are currently on a four day a week schedule and Fridays are tge one day of the week were my kids get to go to the doctor so I as a mother think and want there school and all schools in new mexico to remain a four day week as if kids don't get the time they need a break from school there more likely to drop out of school and besides us parents need more time with our children as there is school long enough they barely even get to have a summer break so I'd like the school's to remain a four day week

From: [Yancey and Karen McCauley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against Proposed Rule Change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:28:00 AM

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I am against the proposed rule change that would require all school districts in the state to adhere to a minimum of 180 student days per academic year instead of meeting the 1,140-hour requirements stated in the statute.

Currently, Cobre Consolidated Schools (Cobre) located in and around Bayard, NM benefit from a calendar with 162 student days and meet the hour requirements mandated by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED). Adding additional days to the calendar does not guarantee improved student outcomes.

This proposed change also threatens and undermines our school district's ability to make decisions that best serve our students, families, and educators. NMPED should continue allowing school districts like Cobre to tailor the school calendar to the unique needs and values of the Cobre community.

Again, I am against the proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements). I am for protecting the unique calendar that has been instrumental in helping Cobre achieve recent gains.

Sincerely,
Karen McCauley

From: [Lynnette Cuellar](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 excludes PD
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:32:16 AM

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

Regarding rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

1. One of the reasons people are drawn to public education is the added perk of time off. When one figures time off into salary, it greatly diminishes the disparity between pay in the private sector vs. public school. You must be vigilant to protect time off for school professionals if it is your intent to attract a competent workforce at the expense of a competent workforce payscale, AND

2. Professional Development is an essential part of professionalism that supports the communication, collaboration, and training that is necessary for advancement of the profession. People are more likely to support and be available for PD when it is offered during contracted work time.

Please reconsider your legislation to include PD when you are constructing the additional time on contracts.

Lynne R. Cuellar
Counselor

Del Norte High School
505-883-7222 Ext. 43025

lynnette.cuellar@aps.edu

Website: <https://sites.google.com/aps.edu/delnortecounseling/home>

From: [Chris Burson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-day week!
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:37:14 AM

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

To whom it may concern, KEEP THE 4 DAY SCHOOL WEEK THE WAY IT IS RIGHT NOW. I live 45 miles from the school and 10 miles to the bus stop. The 10 mile to the bus stop is a dirt road and is not Maintained very well and Maintenance on the vehicles are expensive.

From: [Randall Lackey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed rule change for 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:38:54 AM

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We will lose a ton of staff, some to retirement, some to other professions. Rural districts will lose teachers to bigger districts. Our rural district has half the staff coming from out of district to teach in our 4 day week.

From: [Randall Lackey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed rule change for 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:39:54 AM

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Show me the data that 4 day weeks aren't working! 4 day school week works-especially for small rural schools where teachers and students have to travel. We are consistently ranked as a high performing school by metrics. Seems like the 5 day school weeks are struggling to be in that list. Keep the 4 day week- we are successful.

From: [Rachel Pacheco Duran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:56:19 AM

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I really don't agree with this. This would impact both our students and educators. Our students already have had a hard time with the new schedule this year. Having too many breaks within the school year will throw students off track.

Rachel Pacheco-Duran
rachel.pachecoduran@aps.edu
Teacher SPED Social Studies
Sandia High School
7501 Candelaria Rd NE
Albuquerque NM, 87110
505-294-1511 Ext. 30195

From: [Vanessa Hughes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns Regarding the proposed changes in 6.10.5 rule change
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:56:41 AM

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Vanessa Hughes
Cloudcroft High School
12/8/2023

Subject: Concerns Regarding the proposed changes in 6.10.5 rule change

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding House Bill 130 (HB130) and its potential implications for our school. It has come to my attention that the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) is attempting to create a requirement that does not currently exist in New Mexico law, thus raising concerns about the department's authority in this matter.

I understand the importance of maintaining high standards in education, and I appreciate the efforts of NMPED to enhance the educational experience for students across the state. However, it is crucial to ensure that any proposed requirements align with existing laws and regulations. It has been brought to my attention that HB130 may exceed the current legal framework, and this raises serious questions about the department's authority to impose such requirements.

As stakeholders in the education system, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that policies and regulations are well-founded, fair, and within the bounds of the law. I am concerned that if HB130 were to be enacted, it could negatively impact our school by placing undue burdens on teachers, administrators, and students without a legal basis.

I respectfully urge the NMPED to thoroughly review the legal implications of HB130 and engage in open and transparent communication with stakeholders, including parents,

teachers, and school administrators. It is essential that any changes or requirements introduced by the department are grounded in the existing legal framework to avoid confusion and potential legal challenges.

Our small school is in the top 10% of schools in the state of New Mexico. Because of this I can not see the added extra hours helping with an extra school day to help improve education. The current educational structure is effective. Our data proves that we can move forward with a four-day week.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and your dedication to the improvement of education in our state. I look forward to a resolution that is both legally sound and beneficial for all parties involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Hughes

Vanessa Hughes
SPED Education Assistant, Coach, Parent

--

Vanessa Hughes
Cloudcroft High School
Secretary/Registrar
Head Powerlifting Coach
Head Varsity Volleyball Coach
575-601-4416 Ext 202

Cloudcroft Municipal Schools



From: [Rose Burson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:59:55 AM

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It would not be in the financial best interest for the county state or federal government. The taxes would have to be increased substantially to have this happen. That would be more than we could afford. The children would not learn any more and maybe less .

From: [Nicole Bright-Lesly](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:08:57 AM

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To whom it may concern:

Please refer to State Law 22-2-8 that gives the instructional hours not days and State Law 22-8-23.14, that authorizes schools to operate on a 4-5 day week.

As an administrator in a large 4-day school system your proposal is completely unacceptable, unwarranted, and would cause far more harm than good.

I can almost guarantee that my students here at Tucumcari High School will seek education outside of the public sector if we are forced to go 5 days a week. My high school population makes up a large part of the workforce in this town. They work not for themselves, but for their families. Many put in 30 hrs a week, and are full time students. Fridays are the days they get most of their hours and are able to stay on top of school and college assignments.

While online programs have their advantages, I see many students who have rejoined public education after the fallout from the Covid-19 shutdowns. Students were not successful then and they are not learning the skills to be well-rounded community members from these institutions.

I have an extremely successful Dual-enrollment program with our Community college and they have followed our pattern of 4-day instructional days. The choice should be left to local control and what best fits rural communities.

Just know, if this regulation goes through, I will be looking for at least 8 teachers who will leave the profession and good teachers are hard to find. Just remember, unless you've been there don't find fault in what others chose to do. My staff and I work hard 4 days a week, and the people who will suffer the most are the students in my high school.

Thanks for your time

Nicole Bright-Lesly
Principal
Tucumcari High School

From: [Curtis Clough](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:18:36 AM
Attachments: [Final Copy-Testimony-Calendar Require.docx](#)

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Please see the attached testimony and comments on behalf of Corona Public Schools Board of Education and myself.

Respectfully submitted,

--

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

Written Testimony Presented in Response to Proposed Rulemaking for: 6.10.5 NMAC-School Calendar Requirements

Presented by:

Curtis M. Clough, Superintendent
Corona Public Schools and its Board of Education

On behalf of the Corona Public Schools Board of Education and myself, I present this written testimony in opposition to the proposed rulemaking setting required instruction time and days for public school districts in the way recommended. Last session, a compromise agreement was made that gained support from Superintendents and Boards of Education that allowed four day weeks to stay with increased hours while allowing for valuable professional development time to be included in teacher work time. This rule is attempting to go back on a bipartisan agreement of the Legislature signed by the Governor into law last session and is a direct attack on local control of schools in an attempt to implement a one-size-fits-all model that does not work in the state of New Mexico as a result of its rural and isolated communities. Corona Public Schools was one of the first districts to adopt a four-day week school calendar in 1995 and has become part of the culture and community of our school district. Our district has been very successful with this calendar as is shown by our Elementary School being an Excellent school and our high school being a Spotlight school. The school calendar has become ingrained as part of our community and culture in educating our children.

As outlined in Public School Code (22-2-8.1), the instructional time is outlined in total hours, not days and hours. The current Public School Code sets 1140 instructional hours, inclusive of professional development and engaged work time such as Professional Learning Communities as allowed as part of the time. This rule would effectively increase the work time, based on either being an elementary or secondary teacher with an additional 30 or 60 hours on top of the 1140 hours while mandating 180 work days. The current rule in place addressed many of past injustices to incorporate work during the school and work day that traditionally had to be done outside of work in a non-compensated setting. HB 130 recognizing the fact that teachers had to work outside the school day and contract time was greatly appreciated and helped the morale of our staff as they felt recognized and appreciated. By implementing and approving this rule, you are again adding work to long instructional days or adding days to districts that have been very effective and efficient in the current four-day model. The loss of teachers to retirement greatly increases and exacerbates an issue, especially in rural New Mexico, in a state with teacher shortages and lack of pipeline to fill these positions as we move forward is a critical issue in the student success picture..

Also, the Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14) allows for schools to operate on a four or five day school week. Department regulations cannot force districts into operating in a single format or prohibit districts from operating in a four-day week that is already authorized by statute. As explained earlier, CPS has been on the four-day school week calendar since 1995 and our operational budgets and school culture is centered on that fact. This proposed rule will have a profound impact on the school's budget, particularly in operations and transportation, in order to

accommodate the mandated 180 days. This will add 29 days of instructional time as well as the additional days for professional development and training that will increase our overhead in an inflationary time.

Finally, the research does not support that increased days for instructional time will impact the student achievement in the state. Increasing days in an environment where chronic absenteeism is already an issue seems counterproductive to the goal of increasing student achievement. A lot of factors go into improving student achievement of which the most notable is the quality of instruction that goes in our classrooms. Will adding this time improve the quality of instruction in a state that uses a high number of alternative license people that have little to no pedagogical training? Will the increased time be detrimental to recruiting qualified people into the profession since our higher education institutions are not providing the necessary pipeline to fill the current vacancies in the state? In addition, from the NM Vistas data that was provided by NMPED, 86.1% of all schools in four-day school weeks are meeting performance expectations as outlined by the department with the remaining schools meeting expectations at 72.9%. Of the 140 four-day school week schools, that is 120 schools that are meeting expectations as outlined by NMPED. There are 866 total schools on the NM Vistas report, and 44 schools on four-day school week were either Excellent or Spotlight, 21.4% of all schools in the state in those categories. Overall, only 12 districts on four-day school week are receiving PED support to meet academic performance compared to 40 of the five-day school week, with many having multiple schools. If this is not evidence that smaller class sizes and direct support does not improve the quality of education of the state, I don't know what would be. The Martinez-Yazzie lawsuit says for an equitable education, not equal, so going to this rule would create an instructional model that would be detrimental to overall student learning and achievement in the state.

REQUEST FOR PED RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. If this rule is passed and imposed, how does PED plan on funding the additional costs that will be incurred by all districts that will occur operationally with increased utility usage and transportation costs, systems that have not stayed up with the cost of inflation that is currently happening in our economy?
2. How does PED plan to address the real teacher shortage and pipeline issues of the additional positions that will become available if this rule is implemented?
3. Why are the highest performing schools in the state being targeted by this rule since the research clearly shows that a larger percentage of those schools are achieving state expectations?
4. How does PED plan to address the statutory conflicts that exist in this rule and local control issues that this rule presents?

In closing, this rule will have an adverse effect on small, rural communities as the four-day school week has become part of our fiber. The ability to provide additional opportunities such as CTE Dual Enrollment courses are limited already and will not allow districts to pursue outside the box opportunities for students such as busing to college partners on the fifth day so core

instruction is not directly impacted for our students. Further, national trends are showing 24 states allowing 4 day weeks to address local issues and goals for student performance and potentially 13 more adding this option. This extra day could also allow students to pursue extracurricular activities, hobbies, career pathway opportunities or part-time employment, fostering a more balanced and well-rounded development while not impacting core instruction, which is vital for our students to be successful.

Moreover, a condensed school week could lead to increased teacher and student productivity during the remaining four days. With a longer instructional day, teachers can plan more engaging lessons, offer additional support to struggling students, and provide opportunities for collaborative learning. This restructuring of the school week allows a more focused and efficient learning environment. Research shows smaller class sizes have a direct, positive impact on student achievement which small districts and communities have embraced for the success of their students and children.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Curtis M. Clough
Superintendent
And the Board of Education, Corona Public Schools

From: [Audrey Guerrero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:42:07 AM

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On November 14, 2023, NMPED proposed a rule change to Regulation 6.10.5 that would require all school districts in the state to adhere to 180 student days per academic year, rather than simply meeting the 1,140 hour requirement outlined in the law. I am here to oppose this rule change to support my children's education and their rights.

When it comes to improving academic performance and ensuring the success of students, one of the most frequently proposed solutions is to increase the duration of instructional time. It is often assumed that increasing the amount of time dedicated to teaching will automatically lead to higher test scores and better learning outcomes. However, recent research and studies in the field suggest that this may not always be the case.

Instructional time plays a crucial role in shaping the educational journey of students. It provides a platform for teachers to deliver quality education, facilitate learning activities, and address individual student needs. Teachers can utilize this time to introduce new concepts, explain complex ideas, and facilitate meaningful discussions. Additionally, instructional time allows for practice, assignments, and assessments, which are essential components of a well-rounded education

While it is crucial to allocate sufficient instructional time for effective teaching and learning, it is important to recognize that increasing the duration of instructional time does not automatically guarantee higher test scores. There is a common misconception that longer instructional hours equate to more learning time, resulting in improved academic achievement. However, this assumption fails to consider the numerous factors that influence academic performance.

Test scores are a complex reflection of a student's knowledge, understanding, and abilities. Several factors contribute to a student's performance on a test, including:

1. **Individual Differences:** Each student possesses unique learning style, abilities, and cognitive abilities. These differences impact how effectively they absorb information and retain knowledge.
2. **Teacher Effectiveness:** The quality of instruction and the level of engagement provided by the teacher have a significant impact on student learning. Effective teachers can effectively engage students, make learning enjoyable, and provide support and guidance when needed.
3. **Student Engagement:** Student engagement plays a crucial role in the learning process. If students are not motivated or interested in the subject matter, they may not fully comprehend the concepts and demonstrate lower performance.
4. **Home and Community Support:** Students' educational experiences are heavily influenced by external factors such as home environment, community support, and access to resources.

These factors can significantly impact a student's ability to succeed in school.

While instructional time is an essential aspect of quality education, it is crucial to recognize that simply increasing the duration of instruction does not guarantee higher test scores. Instead, the focus should be on the quality of instruction, student engagement, and other factors that influence academic performance. By adopting a holistic approach and addressing the needs of individual students, we can work towards the goal of 100% proficiency and achieve success beyond just test scores.

Thank you,

Audrey

From: [Lynn Wilson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:52:59 AM

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Dear PED Staffer,

As a teacher at Grant Middle School in Albuquerque, I do not appreciate the outrageous circumvention of state law you are proposing with your 180 day Rule Change. House Bill 130, which just passed in the last legislative session has already mandated 1,140 instructional hours.

As an educator and employee, having my working conditions haphazardly altered makes my life and ability to teach more difficult. I ask you to rescind this proposal.

Has there been any community study, an opportunity for community feedback, town hall meetings, or data that demonstrates this is beneficial to our students' academic success or even if the community at large finds this to be in our community's best interests?

In the future, please consider giving educators consistency and support rather than making decisions with no purpose/community outreach. The working conditions we are facing with teacher and substitute shortages, little substitute coverage where we are asked to cover classes to support our colleagues and students are going to make it even more difficult to find qualified teachers to teach our students.

Thank you, (Put your name and school)
Lynn Wilson
Health Teacher, Dean of Students
Grant Middle School

From: [Jay Boushee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Ruling on 180 days
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:06:27 AM

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Increasing the number of days for students, or even the number of hours for the school year are not the answers to increasing student performance.

Teachers, districts, school leaders, and families need support. They need to have clearly defined expectations, quality materials, and quality communication from the PED.

We need to look at other states that are high performing and research what they are doing to be successful. We have many intelligent people in the policy making area who can adapt what is working in high performing states.

DO NOT mandate 180 school days, it will not help. Provide a funding formula to reduce student to teacher ratios to 15 to 1 maximum in Pre K to 5th grade. Let teachers make connections with their students, fund the districts to provide more special education support in the schools. Learn what our families need, not what legislators that have not taught want.

--

Jay Boushee
Principal and Head Unicorn Wrangler
Knowledge, Engaged, Success
Every Student! Every Day!
Kirtland Elementary School
505-598-5893



From: [Courtney Elkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:07:17 AM

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

Dear PED,

In regards to rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements, I ask that you follow standard procedures including NM full legislative body when trying to change the current law/standing.

My understanding is that NM PED is attempting to change the law, mandating 180 days in school instead of 176 and requiring that all 1140 hours in the classroom, meaning the elimination of PD, or even requiring said PD to take place on days beyond that 180. Do not change our working conditions haphazardly.

I understand that have a chronic teacher shortage. I would not risk making this worse.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

My best,

Courtney Elkins

Courtney M. Elkins, LPCC
ASCA DEI Specialist
Licensed School Counselor
8th Grade Counselor &
7th Grade Counselor for Students M-Z

1820 Valdora Rd SW
Albuquerque NM 87105
505-877-3770 ext 50506
Pronouns: she, her, hers

Website: erniepile.aps.edu

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From: [Shae Diller](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:11:34 AM

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

To whom it may concern,

As a teacher in a rural district, this proposed rule change to demand that all schools in the state of New Mexico adhere to a 180-day calendar, regardless of meeting the requirements previously established for instructional hours, is wasteful at best and damaging to our communities at worst.

First and foremost, this proposed rule completely ignores the needs of students, families, and staff in rural communities. As our current calendar stands, we are able to incorporate Remote Learning Days, and other schools in our area are able to operate on four-days weeks. Since many of our teachers and students travel to the building every day from up to an hour away, taking away those systems in favor of adding more days to the calendar will be very difficult for all of us. These days during the school year that we are not in the building allow all of us to give our transportation a break, or to instead travel the many hours it takes in order to go to doctor's appointments, dental appointments, and otherwise take care of the personal wellbeing needs of ourselves and our families. We cannot simply schedule these appointments on a lunch break, or leave 30 minutes early one day to accomplish them the way that families and staff in larger communities might be able to do. For many of us, it is a *minimum* of a 4-hour round-trip to make any sort of appointment at all. These days we are not in the building provide us the ability to plan ahead so that we can be in attendance for more school days, as opposed to missing school to take care of ourselves. We all know that good attendance of students, and high attendance rates of quality teachers, is crucial to student success. Forcing districts to do away with those days to meet the proposed new rule will only serve to further exacerbate attendance concerns. This will be true of all districts I fear, not just ours. Staff and families deserve to be able to take care of their whole-person needs, lead healthier lives, and still be able to attend school. Please do not make us choose one or the other. You will almost certainly lose some of this state's most wonderful teachers and families to this rule.

Furthermore, this rule also blatantly disregards academic success in this state. Many of the most successful schools in this state do not currently have a 180-day calendar. Why should we force consistently successful schools to change their operations to mirror schools with far lower proficiency rates? This increase in instructional days is not a research-based approach to improving proficiency, attendance, or graduation rates. If teachers are expected to make classroom decisions based on research and carefully analyzed data, those making decisions about our calendar should be held to the same standards. Perhaps the high proficiency rates at the rural schools should be further investigated and replicated instead. In my experience, the shorter calendar attracts higher quality educators to districts they would not otherwise travel to, allows staff and students both to better avoid burnout, and builds stronger community engagement in the schools. It gives us all opportunities to support learning and growth outside of the classroom via more time to be outside, exercise, pursue arts, and even for students to explore potential future careers and grow life skills. Students are able to pursue their extracurricular activities without sacrificing academic time. The school community and parents that are also staff are able to support their athletes in a big way without missing

academic time, either. With such ample opportunities to take better care of our brains, bodies, and spirits, every member of the school community remains better engaged in working towards our goal of an excellent education for New Mexico's future. This results in higher staff retention, positive school-family relationships, and more resilient students. Forcing stakeholders to choose between school days and all of the other important facets of their life will surely result in a loss of motivation and quality in the academic front.

In conclusion, it seems to me that a forced 180-day calendar for every district would be an egregious waste of New Mexico's resources. Perhaps that money would be better spent further supporting the professional growth of teachers, supporting schools that feel they might benefit from an increase in calendar days, and furthering opportunities for students to learn outside of the chairs at their desks. It is our sincere hope that you will consider the many ways this proposed rule will be harmful to rural schools before moving forward with it. We only want what is best for our school community, and most importantly, for our precious students. They only get one opportunity to make the most of these foundational years of their lives. Please allow us to continue giving them the experience they currently enjoy here.

Thank you most sincerely for your time and consideration,
An Engaged and Concerned Teacher

From: [Shae Diller](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:15:22 AM

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I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023 should it be chosen.

Mrs. Shae Diller
Des Moines, NM

On Fri, Dec 8, 2023 at 10:10 AM Shae Diller <s_diller@dmsk12.org> wrote:

To whom it may concern,

As a teacher in a rural district, this proposed rule change to demand that all schools in the state of New Mexico adhere to a 180-day calendar, regardless of meeting the requirements previously established for instructional hours, is wasteful at best and damaging to our communities at worst.

First and foremost, this proposed rule completely ignores the needs of students, families, and staff in rural communities. As our current calendar stands, we are able to incorporate Remote Learning Days, and other schools in our area are able to operate on four-days weeks. Since many of our teachers and students travel to the building every day from up to an hour away, taking away those systems in favor of adding more days to the calendar will be very difficult for all of us. These days during the school year that we are not in the building allow all of us to give our transportation a break, or to instead travel the many hours it takes in order to go to doctor's appointments, dental appointments, and otherwise take care of the personal wellbeing needs of ourselves and our families. We cannot simply schedule these appointments on a lunch break, or leave 30 minutes early one day to accomplish them the way that families and staff in larger communities might be able to do. For many of us, it is a *minimum* of a 4-hour round-trip to make any sort of appointment at all. These days we are not in the building provide us the ability to plan ahead so that we can be in attendance for more school days, as opposed to missing school to take care of ourselves. We all know that good attendance of students, and high attendance rates of quality teachers, is crucial to student success. Forcing districts to do away with those days to meet the proposed new rule will only serve to further exacerbate attendance concerns. This will be true of all districts I fear, not just ours. Staff and families deserve to be able to take care of their whole-person needs, lead healthier lives, and still be able to attend school. Please do not make us choose one or the other. You will almost certainly lose some of this state's most wonderful teachers and families to this rule.

Furthermore, this rule also blatantly disregards academic success in this state. Many of the most successful schools in this state do not currently have a 180-day calendar. Why should we force consistently successful schools to change their operations to mirror schools with far lower proficiency rates? This increase in instructional days is not a research-based approach to improving proficiency, attendance, or graduation rates. If teachers are expected to make classroom decisions based on research and carefully analyzed data, those making decisions about our calendar should be held to the same standards. Perhaps the high proficiency rates at the rural schools should be further investigated and replicated instead. In

my experience, the shorter calendar attracts higher quality educators to districts they would not otherwise travel to, allows staff and students both to better avoid burnout, and builds stronger community engagement in the schools. It gives us all opportunities to support learning and growth outside of the classroom via more time to be outside, exercise, pursue arts, and even for students to explore potential future careers and grow life skills. Students are able to pursue their extracurricular activities without sacrificing academic time. The school community and parents that are also staff are able to support their athletes in a big way without missing academic time, either. With such ample opportunities to take better care of our brains, bodies, and spirits, every member of the school community remains better engaged in working towards our goal of an excellent education for New Mexico's future. This results in higher staff retention, positive school-family relationships, and more resilient students. Forcing stakeholders to choose between school days and all of the other important facets of their life will surely result in a loss of motivation and quality in the academic front.

In conclusion, it seems to me that a forced 180-day calendar for every district would be an egregious waste of New Mexico's resources. Perhaps that money would be better spent further supporting the professional growth of teachers, supporting schools that feel they might benefit from an increase in calendar days, and furthering opportunities for students to learn outside of the chairs at their desks. It is our sincere hope that you will consider the many ways this proposed rule will be harmful to rural schools before moving forward with it. We only want what is best for our school community, and most importantly, for our precious students. They only get one opportunity to make the most of these foundational years of their lives. Please allow us to continue giving them the experience they currently enjoy here.

Thank you most sincerely for your time and consideration,
An Engaged and Concerned Teacher

From: [Cheryl W](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 Proposed Rule Change
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:17:55 AM

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To whom it may concern,

The proposed rule would completely devastate the amazing work the school I am at is doing. We are a high performing public charter, working 4 long days a week, using Fridays for both office hours for kids' makeup and one-on-one work, and PD. My school is one of the top performing in the STATE, and we function on a four-day work week. As an AP teacher, our school even earned Silver distinction and Access awards through the collegeboard, all while thriving on a 4-day school week.

This proposed bill completely flies in the face of the actual data on education outcomes, and I am certain it would INCREASE the already huge lack in teachers willing to work, and it would also stop schools from problem solving in ways that actually work for their populations.

PLEASE do not pass this rule change. It is horrifying as a passionate educator when I think both of the high standards at my school for my students, and also when I think of the already waning desire of teachers to work in an increasingly difficult field.

Best,
Cheryl Walker, AP English Language & AP English Literature Teacher

From: [Dain Forsythe](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Proposed Rule Change
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:20:46 AM

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Regarding this rule change: 180 School Day Year, and 50% of the school year must be 5 day weeks.

The quality of learning that students experience at the ASK Academy in Rio Rancho will be completely undermined with the implementation of this rule change. Our schedule as it stands is an instrumental aspect of our culture and a reason our students' families choose our school. This change will negatively impact our ability to achieve our academic goals.

Sincerely,

Dain Forsythe

From: [Kelsey Rust](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:26:10 AM

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Good morning,

I am a secondary educator, and I'd like to share my feedback in regard to the upcoming ruling on additional calendar days in the school year that is being discussed within the Department of Education. This motion is a band-aide solution that doesn't adequately mitigate the problems that our students face in education. The additional spending to place students in desks at a higher capacity will not solve our problems in education. If we were to add more days, then we should be doing so through professional development so educators can improve their teaching skills so students have a higher rate of meeting mastery of the state standards.

Additionally, the funding that would be allocated for these days do not meet the needs or equitable access for students who do not have the resources at home in order to be successful. It will not solve our mass population of poor attendance, or the trauma that has occurred due to the pandemic. Families should be the focal point for support in our state, not additional days of school.

Moreover, if additional fluctuation in our calendar continues to occur, I will be re-considering my position as an educator.

Thank you for your time.
Kelsey Rust

From: [Leslie Burgess](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:32:36 AM

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Hello, I am writing to request that you do not vote to change House Bill 130. This would be a huge undermining of our legislative process. This year was already a significant change in the number of days and hours that we are required to work and students are to be in school. I do not agree that more time thrown onto students and staff is an effective way to deal with the perceived "loss of learning" from Covid. We are still trying to get used to this new schedule that was thrown at us, and now you are trying to make an unnecessary change as well as circumvent the law. Educators are TIRED. We are working hard, working the extra days and hours put into law, as well as all the time we spend outside of the school day preparing and grading. We do not need MORE TIME at school or PD! We need consistency, responsiveness, and support, not ineffective arbitrary changes to our working conditions. Listen to the educators and experts in the field and do not pass 6.10.5!

Sincerely,

--

Leslie Burgess

Professional School Counselor

La Cueva High School

505-823-2327 x 33006

<https://lacueva.aps.edu/our-school/counseling/burgess>

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From: [Kimberly Key](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:33:11 AM

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

I am emailing in opposition to the proposed amendment to the School Instructional Time Requirements, which if passed, would require at least 190 days in our school calendar.

As a classroom teacher of 17 years in Chaves and Eddy Counties, I have seen increases in the length of the school year and outcomes have not improved for students but the teacher shortage continues to increase. Teachers have seen gains to help make our salary comparable with other higher paying states and this increase of days with a minimal pay increase will diminish those gains and drive more teachers out of the profession here in NM. Furthermore, this will cause an increase in overall spending for districts and the state is not providing an increase in budget. This will funnel down to classrooms and students not having the resources needed to be successful and in many cases, teachers will end up picking up the tab out of our own pockets.

More school days in the classroom do not equate to student success. Attendance, or lack thereof, is already an issue and requiring more days for students will not encourage them to come to school regularly. Teacher effectiveness is the strongest school-related determinant of student success, but chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities. Attendance needs to be addressed. Hold parents accountable and provide support and resources. Parents and the public have a negative perception of our profession and education in NM thanks to years of seeing no improvement to our last place rank in the nation, so perhaps they just don't see the value in sending their kids to school everyday. We need to change this perception and help parents buy into the value of education here in NM and having a longer school year is not the answer.

I am also opposed to requiring a 5 day school week for the smaller school districts. These districts are some of the highest achieving districts in our state with the highest graduation rates. Why attempt to fix what isn't broken? Leave the smaller school districts alone and let them continue on being successful!

Kimberly Key
Artesia Public Schools

From: [Dani McNatt](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 proposed Rule
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:39:47 AM

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Good morning,

I hope this letter finds you well and ready for a call to action. I am writing because I have become aware of some rule changes being proposed by the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) which I feel would negatively impact our current four-day school week schedule. **The NMPED “proposed” changes in the 6.10.5 Proposed Rules.** While it is important to prioritize education and ensure that students receive an adequate amount of instructional time, I believe that the four-day school week has proven to be beneficial for both students and teachers. It allows for more focused learning during the four days in session, while also providing an additional day for extracurricular activities, family time, and rest.

The proposed rule change would disrupt this balance and put unnecessary strain on students, teachers, and families. It would result in longer school days and potentially lead to burnout among students who already face numerous academic pressures. Additionally, it could create scheduling conflicts for families who rely on the extra day off for childcare or work arrangements.

Instead of mandating a specific number of student days, I urge the NMPED to consider alternative solutions that maintain the flexibility provided by the four-day school week while still ensuring quality education. This could include implementing more targeted interventions or enrichment programs during the shorter school week.

Thank you for your time,

--

Dani McNatt
CMS Health Assistant
575-601-4416 Ext. 304

From: [Jacqueline McHorse](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:44:46 AM

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Hey NMPED,

I wanted to reach out to you about HB130 as it concerns my family and the school we chose for our daughter to attend.

In regards to bill HB130, I hope you will vote NO. My daughter attends TISA (Taos Integrated School of the Arts) which operates 4 days per week. We love this schedule of operation for her education and was part of the reason we selected this school for her.

Some points about the 4 day that I'd like to share:

It helps attract and retain quality teachers, reduce overhead costs of building operation, maintenance and food service. Twenty five other states are practicing 4 day weeks. TISA currently is a four day a week school that was recognized as a Spotlight school performing in the top 15% of the state for the last three years.

Compacting school into just four days a week leaves more time with family, friends and outside interests and it increases school attendance. TISA was one of the top schools with school attendance last year. We consistently have over 95% attendance.

I appreciate you taking this into consideration for TISA and other charter schools around the state.

Thank you for all you do!

--

Jacqueline McHorse
www.BisonStarNaturals.com

From: [F.G](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regarding 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:58:09 AM

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Hello,

I am writing as a parent, teacher, and community member to say that I am vehemently opposed to your proposed rule change. Firstly, I think it is absolutely an over-reach for you to attempt to side-step the legislative process like you are trying to. The current rule was vetted, debated, and revised with community and legislative input. How dare you try to subvert the will of the people?

Second, I was opposed to the increase in instructional hours to begin with. The problems facing education in our state cannot be solved with a one-size fits all approach that allows you (PED) to do the least amount of work possible to attempt to meet your obligations in the Yazzie/Martinez case. The biggest problems facing students will not be solved by adding hours to their day or days to the year. They are living with extreme poverty, homelessness, violence, drugs and alcohol in the home, abuse, ptsd, systemic racism, and learning disabilities. Adding days will not solve the problem of 20-40% truancy in students. Adding days will do nothing to alleviate the teacher shortage, or prevent teachers leaving the district because of burn-out and lack of support.

My children and I are barely getting by mentally, emotionally, and physically. We do not have any more energy to give. My 8 year old had a breakdown yesterday because of our tough schedule. My 5 year old falls asleep in the car every single day. We leave the house at 7am and do not get home until 5:30PM, if we are lucky. Worse, my children spend a measly 3 hours a day with me, all of which is spent either rushing them to school, rushing them home, or rushing them to finish their homework and eat and bathe. We do this every day, just trying to hold on until the weekend. It is a bleak existence. Children need childhoods!! They need time to play. Free-play where they use their imagination and develop motor skills and social skills. They need time to reflect on their learning, and just spend time with their families.

We need meaningful breaks to rest and recharge, and this includes summer break where many families use time for extracurriculars they cannot participate in during the school year, travel to visit families, or attend tutoring or summer school to catch up. Teachers use this time to recharge their batteries, attend professional development that will be meaningful to their own practice(not the canned, generic PD's that are mandated and do nothing to actually improve our teaching) or to advance their own education thereby improving their teaching.

Finally, your proposal that collaborative meetings, PTC's and professional development are not counted in the instructional hours is absolutely the wrong move. That will essentially give teachers even less precious time, which as I mentioned above, is already severely lacking. Look at some of the most successful schools in New Mexico and you will find that they give their teachers ample time for planning, collaboration, and professional development.

If you really want to improve the outlook of New Mexico students, consider changes that will give teachers more time for feedback, planning, grading, differentiating, and collaborating. I cannot do these things when I have 30 students in my room that I have to watch like a hawk. I cannot help my struggling students because there are just too many in each class and I am one person. We need more EAs, more special education teachers, and smaller class sizes. These are the radical changes that can have meaningful impact.

Allow schools and districts to make their own decisions regarding how best to meet the instructional hours obligations. Schools and districts should be able to interpret the legislative rules in ways that make sense for their own communities. Not this one-size-fits-all approach you like.

If your rule goes through I am absolutely looking to change careers, and this is coming from a 3rd year teacher. I am in the beginning of what could be a long and productive career. I love teaching, but I got into it to make a difference and have more time with my family. You will also lose even more enrolled families as they opt to move to homeschooling or even moving out of state.

Sincerely,

Faye Gibson
APS Teacher and Parent

From: [Jennifer Beeman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Charter School Parent
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:01:19 AM

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Hello,

I have several students, two in APS and one in a charter school. The NEW APS schedule has been EXTREMELY hard for our family in regards to finding people to watch the kids on "Professional Development days" and NOW you all are wanting to do this with the charter schools too?!?!

PLEASE FOR THE LOVE OF KIDS.... DON'T DO THIS!!!!!!

These kids are already having to grow up WAY too fast! They do not need more instructional time!! They need less state testing so that they can actually have instructional time!!

ALSO, FOR THE LOVE OF KIDS..... STOP CUTTING THE DANG BUDGETS!!!!!!

Thank you for allowing me to state my input in this matter.

Jennifer Beeman
Concerned WORKING Parent

From: [Lydia Bustamante](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to changes
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:01:56 AM

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In response to proposed changes recently brought to our attention, please consider:

School Calendar Requirements

Increasing instructional days decreases teacher and student moral, creating opposite effects of more learning time; teacher as well as student burn out will be more evident and result in loss of attendance for both parties due to lack of rest time during the school year. Teacher shortage is already an issue and increasing the school year and decreasing “recharging days” will only deter more graduates from entering the profession as well as cause more new teachers to seek other professions. Incentives to the profession should be considered as opposed to adding more days to the already heavily-burdened profession. The time to rest and recharge is an important part of keeping teachers in their jobs.

6.10.5.8 C 3 The one school in our district that scored the highest “Excellent” rating, is a 4-day school. I think the consideration is backward, seems as if that 4-day week is proving more effective than a traditional 5-day week. This seems to contrary to the goal of improving our schools. Less of quality education is more effective as shown in our excellent-rated school. Increasing rest time seems to have a positive effect on performance.

6.10.5.8 E In my own school where I have been responsible for cafeteria supervision for the last ten years, I have seen how difficult it was when lunch times (time required in cafeteria seats) increased to meet requirements, has created more behavior issues in the cafeteria than ever before. Increasing this time will not increase students consuming more of their lunch; it will create more behavior issues at the lunch table. Students have always been allowed the time they need to eat all of the lunch they want, that has never been an issue. Increasing lunch times will decrease time on task in the classroom where teachers can make a difference. Students that require more time to eat are always allowed that time, while other students that are able to consume all of their lunch in the allotted time are allowed to move out of the cafeteria. This requirement should consider what is consumed as opposed to how long they sit in their seat.

Lydia Bustamante,
Teacher and Parent in Public Elementary School

From: [Mary Kelly](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:02:49 AM

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The proposal to extend the school year by eliminating collaboration and parent conferences from instructional time is a decision that rejects educational research and disregards the needs of students and teachers. I would propose some questions that you should be prepared to answer should you pass this misguided rule:

Do you want teachers to quit?

What will you do when teachers quit en masse?

Have you considered the teacher shortage that already exists?

Have you taken any time to assess whether the changes made to the calendar for this year (2023-2024) are effective?

What evidence can you cite that eliminating collaboration time and parent conferences will improve educational outcomes?

Would you prefer parents send their students to charter schools and private schools that don't have absurd schedules, thus undermining and destroying public education?

NM PED: This change is short-sighted and not evidence based. Do not pass this rule.

--

From: [Goff, April](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: sharon.epps@clovis-schools.org; [April Goff](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130 - 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:05:45 AM

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Good morning,

I am writing on behalf of my children and my community in opposition of the current proposed rules to HB130 - 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar requirements. It is my understanding that in previous years the rule and definition of required annual education for students was measured in hours, which is now proposed to be changed to days. This can have catastrophic damages to our community, schools, and students.

By enforcing a 180-day school year the PED is revoking local district control over school calendars and prohibiting our communities from creating a calendar that works best for our region of the state. As a rural community there are numerous things to be considered when scheduling a school year. Things that may not be important to the I-25 corridor schools like agriculture, fairs, livestock, and harvest times are deeply rooted in a rural community. Being able to plan a school calendar around those events is very important and adding 10 more instructional days to our calendar can be very prohibitive to supporting this culture.

Currently our school district is scheduled for 170 days plus 13 professional development days. We still meet the required 1,040 hours of instructional time which our educators' contracts and salaries are tied to. By changing the instructional requirement from hours to days it prohibits districts from being able to incorporate professional development into educators' contracts. Some may say that professional development is an unnecessary component of education, however isn't that the entire basis of education in the first place? If we do not afford our educators time to develop, learn, engage, and enrich we are not allowing them to partake in the very thing we are trying to offer our students.

There has not been any mention of how a change to 180 instructional days is managed from a financial standpoint. Our teachers were awarded pay increases last year from the State of NM based on their current contract. By extending the school year the pay increase is effectively removed, or if their pay is kept the same the districts are left to cover expenses that are not funded. How are communities supposed to recruit and retain talent when professional development is gone, and contracted days are extended? When you add the overhead costs of buildings, transportation, salaries, and other miscellaneous expense it is estimated that this change would cost our district around \$1 million dollars a day. That is a \$10 million-dollar short fall, something that cannot be afforded in our poverty-stricken state and district.

The economic impact on our community is another concern. What happens when instruction days are enforced instead of hours? School days get shorter. As an employer it is very difficult to cover shifts and schedules when employees cannot be at work due to school drop off and pick up times interfering. Also, when parents are not home with their children who are home from school there is a greater risk of delinquent behavior by the child. Safety of our children and our community become a concern. I agree that having kids in school is very important however the quality of hours they spend at school is what is most important. Additionally, our kids need to be able to be kids. The world today has made our children grow

up far beyond their years. Being a kid should still mean being bored in the summer, having a week off for spring break to take a family vacation and other opportunities that allow them to disconnect. Having a balanced lifestyle is important for everyone to stay engaged and invested in their work and personal lives. That should not be any different for our kids.

I hope that the PED will consider a rule change that would allow district control, base instruction requirements on hours instead of days and promote the best outcomes for our children and our community.

Thank you,

April Goff
Clovis, NM
Clovis Municipal School District
(c) 575-309-3191

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From: [Andrea Valenzuela](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:11:45 AM

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Dear PED Staffer,

As a teacher at Grant Middle School in Albuquerque, I do not appreciate the outrageous circumvention of state law you are proposing with your 180 day Rule Change. House Bill 130, which just passed in the last legislative session has already mandated 1,140 instructional hours.

As an educator and employee, having my working conditions haphazardly altered makes my life and ability to teach more difficult. I ask you to rescind this proposal. I find it degrading that educators are not able to receive compensation from the work they perform and are expected to hold parent teacher conferences, professional development, mentorship, coaching, and collaboration on their own time for the same pay.

In the future, please consider giving educators consistency and support rather than capricious decisions.

Thank you,
Andrea Valenzuela
Special Education Teacher Grant Middle School

--

Andrea Valenzuela -she/her
SPED Teacher Grant Middle School
1111 Easterday NE
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From: [Jeff Spaletta](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:41:23 AM

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Hello,

I am completely in favor of requiring all schools in New Mexico to transition to a five day work week for staff and students.

While working at a four day school district I saw the problems with a four day week.

1. Students were not getting the education they needed
2. Rural students are even further behind and need more, not less time in the classroom.
3. Many teachers already take off on Friday for personal time. In four day a week schools, teachers take off on Thursday leaving the students with only three days of instruction per week.
4. New Mexico ranks near the bottom in the United States; if it was a top level education state it wouldn't make sense to change the calendar structure. New Mexico needs improvement and it should start with problems like the calendar.
5. A decision should be based on the kids, not the adults. Students are suffering in New Mexico because adults want to have four day work weeks. Think about the students first.
6. Rural district administrators are already getting back too much for less work. The scores don't show that the schools are all doing well.
7. Kids in poverty need food and supervision, not another day at home in many cases.
8. Studies show that students in a four day week are behind in learning by two months or more. This adds up over the life of a K-12 education in a four day week district.
9. The four day week is problematic in inequality, particularly in lower income families.

Do the right thing and eliminate the four day week so the students can get a better education.

--

Respectfully,

Jeff Spaletta

From: [John Przyborowski](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 12:04:35 PM

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

I am alarmed that NM PED is suggesting a change to the existing school year instructional requirements. Adding additional time is **not** a solution to helping student truancy or graduation rates; it's simply another bureaucratic practice that does nothing to address the **actual** issues that our students, families, and school face.

Teachers need smaller class sizes and **more** planning time to be effective and excellent educators. Students and families need more flexibility in their schedules to accommodate busy lives and multiple jobs. And adding professional development hours to the school year increases the burden on teaching professionals and will further increase the teacher shortage as we push more and more educators out of teaching.

Piling on more hours to address deficits in learning and attendance is patently absurd - instead let's focus on creating more **flexibility** and **quality** for our students *and* our educators.

John Przyborowski
Santa Fe

From: [Windey McKelvie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Change Rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 12:15:35 PM

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

Hello,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed change to mandate a statewide 5-day school week without consideration of the special circumstances for rural schools currently operating under a 4-day school week. As a dedicated educator in a rural community, I believe that such a shift would have detrimental effects on teachers, staff, and students as well as our greater community.

Our school, situated in a rural area, faces unique challenges that need special consideration. In a small school with limited staff, teachers are required to teach multiple classes to provide our students with as many options as possible. Personally, I am responsible for six different preps, and a significant portion of my third weekend day is dedicated to preparing for this class load. Implementing a 5-day school week would eliminate this extra prep time and jeopardize our faculty's ability to offer a diverse selection of classes, potentially leading to the elimination of our Advanced Placement (AP) program. This reduction in class options would be detrimental to our students, affecting both their Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities and core academic experiences.

Moreover, our school is located in a highly desirable tourist area, resulting in housing costs that are unreasonable compared to market value. Many of our teachers are unable to afford living in the district and commute from outside areas. The 4-day school week serves as an incentive for teachers to accept positions in our district despite the commute involved. Without this incentive, we risk losing a significant portion of our faculty and staff.

Beyond the factors I have mentioned that will directly impact the quality of Cloudcroft student education, a 5-day school week would impact our community as well. The high school facilities are used to support community activities as we do not have a town hall or community center. Mondays will often find the school used for community events such as firefighting training courses or blood drives.

Our community is thriving with the 4-day school week. Cloudcroft High School is recognized by NM PED as a **School of Excellence** performing in the top 10% of high schools in the state. More specifically, CHS is ranked in the top 10 of all high schools in the state. Our students consistently outscore both the state and nation in standardized test scores. The 4-day school week has proven to be a successful fit for our students and our community, and our community should retain the autonomy to choose what works best for our environment and needs.

I implore you to reconsider the mandated change to a 5-day school week. Our unique

circumstances demand thoughtful and tailored solutions that take into account the well-being of educators, students, and our greater community. I appreciate your attention to this matter and trust that you will make decisions that prioritize the best interests of our community.

Sincerely,

--

Windey McKelvie
AP/ELA Teacher
NHS Advisor
Cloudecroft High School
575-601-4416

From: [Goldie Jimenez](#)
To: [Alcon, Eliseo Lee](#); [anthony.allison@nmlegis.gov](#); [Janelle.Anyanonu](#); [gail@gailfornewmexico.com](#); [John.Block@nmlegis.gov](#); [Cynthia.Borrego@nmlegis.gov](#); [c.brown.nm55@gmail.com](#); [micaela.cadena@nmlegis.gov](#); [ambrose.castellano@nmlegis.gov](#); [Kathleen.Cates@nmlegis.gov](#); [Chasey, Gail](#); [jack.chatfield@nmlegis.gov](#); [Eleanor.Chavez@nmlegis.gov](#); [art.delacruz@nmlegis.gov](#); [Dixon, Meredith](#); [Mark.Duncan@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ferrary, Joanne J.](#); [natalie.figueroa@nmlegis.gov](#); [Gallegos, Doreen Y.](#); [hgarciad69](#); [Garcia, Miguel P.](#); [joy.garratt](#); [JasonHarperNM](#); [joshua.hernandez](#); [pamelya.herndon@nmlegis.gov](#); [dayan.hochman-vigil@nmlegis.gov](#); [Tara.Jaramillo@nmlegis.gov](#); [Johnson, Wonda D.](#); [Jenifer.Jones@nmlegis.gov](#); [ryan@laneforalliberty.com](#); [raymundo.lara@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lente, Derrick L.](#); [stefani.lord@nmlegis.gov](#); [tara.lujan@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lundstrom, Patricia A.](#); [willie.madrid@nmlegis.gov](#); [Alan.Martinez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Martinez, Javier](#); [Jimmy.Mason@nmlegis.gov](#); [McQueen, Matthew](#); [Tanya.MirabalMoya@nmlegis.gov](#); [Montoya, Rod](#); [Nibert, Greg](#); [kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov](#); [randall.pettigrew@nmlegis.gov](#); [Andrea.Reeb@nmlegis.gov](#); [andrea@andrearomero.com](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#); [Roybal Caballero, Patricia](#); [Rubio, Angelica](#); [joseph.sanchez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Sarinana, Debra M.](#); [Scott, Larry R.](#); [linda.serrato@nmlegis.gov](#); [Small, Nathan P.](#); [Reena.Szczepanski@nmlegis.gov](#); [luis.terrazas@nmlegis.gov](#); [Thomson, Elizabeth](#); [townsend@pvtm.net](#); [Harlan.Vincent@nmlegis.gov](#); [martin.zamora@nmlegis.gov](#); [greg.baca@nmlegis.gov](#); [Brandt, Craig W.](#); [Burt, William F.](#); [Campos, Pete](#); [joseph.cervantes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Maestas, Antonio](#); [crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov](#); [katy.duhigg@nmlegis.gov](#); [david@ramirezandsonsinc.com](#); [Gonzales, Roberto J.](#); [Griggs, Ron](#); [carrie.hamblen@nmlegis.gov](#); [siah.hemphill](#); [martin.hickey@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ivey-Soto, Daniel](#); [Jaramillo, Leo](#); [Kernan, Gay](#); [Lopez, Linda M.](#); [brenda.mckenna@nmlegis.gov](#); [Moores, Mark](#); [George Munoz](#); [Neville, Steven P.](#); [BILL@BILLONEILL4NM.COM](#); [Ortiz y Pino, Gerald](#); [Padilla, Michael](#); [shannon.pinto@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pirtle, Cliff R.](#); [harold.popejr](#); [Istefanics@msn.com](#); [Rodriguez, Nancy](#); [Steinborn, Jeff](#); [jas4nm@gmail.com](#); [Stewart, Mimi](#); [gregg.schmedes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Tallman, Bill](#); [a.sedillolopez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Wirth, Peter](#); [Sharer, William E.](#); [Woods, Pat](#); [Shendo, Benny](#); [Soules, William P.](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose Mandatory 5 Day School Week
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 12:57:03 PM

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

NM State Legislator:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day week within our educational system. As a concerned citizen and educator deeply invested in the welfare of our schools and communities, I implore you to reconsider this change for several critical reasons.

Firstly, the shift to a 5-day week risks the premature retirement of dedicated educators who have structured their lives around the current schedule. Many seasoned teachers have adapted their personal and professional commitments to the 4-day format, and altering this could force them into an unwelcome early exit from their careers, causing a significant loss of experience and expertise in our schools.

Moreover, the potential loss of qualified staff is a genuine concern. The appeal of a 4-day week has attracted skilled educators to our district, contributing to its strength and success. Reverting to a 5-day model risks losing these valuable professionals, impacting the quality of education offered to our students.

Additionally, the transition may lead to a decline in student enrollment. Families have chosen our district based on the unique structure and benefits of a 4-day school week. Altering this could prompt families to seek alternatives, resulting in a loss of students and associated funding.

It's important to note that current data has demonstrated the success of schools operating on

a 4-day schedule. These institutions have shown high performance, indicating that the current system is effective in fostering academic achievement and student success.

Furthermore, the financial implications of this change cannot be ignored. The costs associated with reverting to a 5-day week—such as increased transportation, utility expenses, and operational overhead—will strain the budget. This allocation of resources away from educational programs and other critical areas could detrimentally affect the holistic development of our students.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to consider the long-term impact on educators, students, and the overall educational quality before proceeding with this proposed change. Instead, let us focus on supporting and enhancing the successful 4-day model that has proven to benefit our local community and its educational goals.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. I trust that your decision will prioritize the best interests of our educators, students, and the educational system as a whole.

Sincerely,

Goldie Jimenez

Elida, NM

gjimenez@floydbroncos.com

From: [Naomi Brown](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 12:57:11 PM

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As a concerned APS employee, and mother of three APS students, I strongly oppose the expanded school calendars and increase in the number of instructional days required for students. Furthermore, requiring every minute to be spent in the classroom with students places a huge burden on our already overworked teachers, and takes away valuable time for planning and collaboration. Continuing to add days to the school year is a false solution for complex issues.

Do not punish the incredible teachers and staff throughout APS with these reckless mandates. We are already overworked, understaffed, underpaid, unappreciated, and doing our best to meaningfully engage students despite deplorable working conditions and little to no resources. We simply cannot survive this unending burden and shame placed on us by the NM Public Education Department. This is not only harmful to our exhausted employees, it negatively impacts our students and our communities.

Positive changes in public education will *never* happen if you continue to deflect accountability for *your* financial neglect and punish those of us who are willing to step into the trenches of public education and work tirelessly to provide safe, positive learning environments for our children to flourish. We cannot withstand this blatant disrespect and disregard of our basic needs as public educators. Many of my colleagues are set on leaving public schools, not because they want to, but because they are simply trying to survive. I am at a loss. This cannot continue. We NEED our educators!

The majority of our communities and families are impoverished and desperate for resources they can actually depend on. We are seeing a huge rise in social, emotional, and behavioral issues due to ongoing trauma; and yet, we have not been given the support we need to address these growing concerns. We simply do not have the resources to enforce truancy rules or comply with health and safety standards, and are caught in an endless cycle of poor outcomes. Yet *we are not the problem!*

I am shocked and dismayed by this haphazard change in my working conditions. I implore you to *support us*, the employees showing up day after day because we care about these students, families, and communities. We cannot continue to survive this constant abuse and blame while our legislators ignore the root causes contributing to educational shortfalls.

Please hear us, and seriously consider what is *best* for public education in NM.

Naomi Brown, MSN, RN, NCSN
APS School Nurse (she/her)
Email: naomi.brown@aps.edu



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From: [Shawna Roybal](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Instructional Time Requirement Feedback
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 12:58:00 PM

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

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed amendment to increase school instructional time requirements from 1140 hours to 180 days. As a dedicated middle school math teacher with 17 years of experience, I believe this amendment would exacerbate teacher burnout without addressing the core issues affecting student attendance.

While I share the commitment to improving educational outcomes, I am concerned that this proposed amendment may have unintended consequences. Adding extra days to the academic calendar could significantly contribute to teacher burnout, as the current challenges of engaging students and adapting to diverse learning needs are already demanding. Quality teaching is more important than sheer quantity of instructional time, and exhausted teachers cannot provide the best education for their students.

Furthermore, the reality is that students are facing various barriers to attendance, leading to absenteeism. Simply increasing the time requirement without addressing these underlying issues may not effectively tackle the root cause of the problem. Instead, I propose an alternative approach that has gained traction among educators.

Many teachers, myself included, would welcome a transition to a four-day school week, with Fridays designated as a teacher workday. This shift would not only provide educators with much-needed time for professional development, collaboration, and administrative tasks but also allow for a more focused and efficient use of instructional time during the remaining four days.

Moreover, this innovative approach has shown promising results in other districts, fostering a positive impact on both teacher well-being and student engagement.

I urge you to consider the potential negative consequences of the proposed amendment and explore alternative solutions that prioritize the quality of education and the well-being of educators. A collaborative dialogue involving teachers, administrators, and policymakers can lead to more effective and sustainable changes that benefit everyone involved in the education system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Shawna Roybal

From: [Araceli Tovar](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:13:48 PM

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New Mexico 4-day week districts are in consensus that this rule change lacks support from research, which indicates more instructional days for student's does not guarantee improved student outcomes. Rather, factors such as regular attendance, student engagement, smaller class sizes, rigorous learning opportunities, highly qualified teachers, high quality learning materials, and strong family and community support are proven contributors to academic success.

Araceli Tovar
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Karen Griffin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Topic: 6.10.5 NMAC , school calendar requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:27:46 PM

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To whom it may concern:

Please do not add any more days to the APS school year. This year we already added more hours to each day and more school days total and I feel they are enough, if not overkill. I would like my children to have a full 8 week summer. I believe our teachers can be effective in teaching the curriculum with a standard length school year. We don't pay our public school teachers enough money or respect to continue to take away their time without their heavily considered input. This is only my 4th school year with a child in the APS system and we have seen several significant changes already. Why can we not leave things be for more than a year and see how they turn out? Consistency matters.

Signed,
Karen Griffin
Zip code 87122
Parent of two elementary aged children

From: [Eric Brayden](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:37:16 PM

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Hello,

Please REJECT 10 days of professional development added to the school calendar. We already have enough professional development. Additional professional development does not develop professionals. Making the job tolerable for those professionals is what develops professionals.

What will actually improve student outcomes is lessening administrative burdens on teachers, reducing class sizes, incentivizing experts and experienced teachers to stay in the job, desegregating schools, improving student attendance, alleviating the bus driver shortage, unionizing principals so they can have honest discourse with district leadership, and reducing reliance on E2020 and credit recovery workarounds.

Eric Brayden
Social Studies
Capital High School

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From: [T.B](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: Changing requirements so that ALL schools would have a 5 day school week-HB130 hourly requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:43:35 PM

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I write concerning the reports that due to HB-130, PED is determining whether to change the current rule that allows some schools to have 4 day school weeks as long as they meet all the time requirements, both for instructional hours and staff training and require all schools to have 5 day weeks.

Full disclosure, I do not currently have children in school. I do have grandchildren that will be affected by this decision though.

I write because I have some experience in the effects on both the children and the school district when they have 4 day school weeks. Over my husband's career with the New Mexico State Police, we moved 7 times in 14 years. My daughters attended both 4 day schools and 5 day schools. For them, when in 4 day weeks, they were more rested, eager to attend school and concentrated better. When in 5 day weeks, they had less time to take care of other things that were important to them, thereby sometimes being distracted when in school.

When in a 5 day school week, all appointments will take you away from some instruction on the day you are absent. Most 4 day schools are in rural areas, where if Mom, Dad or any of the kids have an appointment, there is a good chance that all will be going. The appointments are usually far enough away that it is an all day thing and no certainty that they will be back by the end of the school day. So, the kids lose out on the teacher/student instruction for that day, not to mention, if they are in sports, they lose a day of practice. Also, staff will also have to be absent on the days they have appointments. So, the students end up with a substitute teacher, and I can tell you from experience as a substitute, that the students do not get the same quality of instruction. The bond between teacher and student is not there and the sub doesn't always know the direction the teacher is moving in, so the instruction is very generalized.

Also, being rural, many of the students are on buses for upwards of an hour each way. By going 4 days instead of 5, they get more rest so that they are better able to concentrate when in school. Some of the teachers also commute for more than an hour each way, since there is not always housing available near where the school is located.

The students in 4 day schools are more well rounded and seem much happier to be there than in 5 day schools. They are better socialized and more caring for their fellow students. They help each other with lessons as well as life issues. I feel that that is why there is a higher graduation rate or lower dropout rate, however you want to look at it, than in 5 day schools. Also, many of our 4 day schools have higher testing scores than the 5 day schools.

Now as to the financial side of things. For parents, some have to drive their children to meet the bus and pick them up. Doing so 4 days a week saves them money, as well as possibly saving the school district some money. I don't know if it is still the same, but when my girls were in school, if a student lived off the bus route, the school paid some of them to bring the children to meet the bus.

Not having to heat, cool and light the school one day saves a lot of money as well. For those schools that take Monday as their day off, they reap the full reward of that. Some schools take Friday off, so they don't save as much, as they have some sporting events on Friday. Schools that have 5 day weeks have to provide 30 plus more days of breakfast and lunch and now that all students are entitled to free meals, that is a big chunk of their budget. Also, some of the schools pay the bus drivers/company by the number of days they run. This could increase their transportation budget by as much as 25%.

Also, schools that take Monday as their day off reap the benefit of most holidays being observed on Monday, so they really don't take as many days off as some would think.

Today, when finding staff gets harder and harder every day, a 4 day week is one of the ways that the rural schools can attract teachers. One school in our area has stated that several of their teachers said the 4 day week was the deciding factor on accepting a job offer there as opposed to a 5 day school.

What it boils down to, in my opinion on 4 day weeks, is this:

The students are more content, eager to learn and graduate at higher rates with higher test scores.

The teachers are happier, more likely to stay and are there for the students more than 5 day schools.

The school SAVES money. That can be used to better educate our students.

Please, do not change the ruling to be that all schools have to attend 5 days a week. What would be next - year round classes? Leave things as they are - the school board, with PED approval, decides how many days to go, 4 or 5.

Respectfully,

Terry Brown
Springer, NM

From: [Daniel Torrez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:46:03 PM

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I'm emailing to express my opposition to an 180 day school year that doesn't include meeting days, PD, or parent teacher conferences.

The students that absolutely need to be in school don't have the adequate home resources to ensure they are at school every day.

Use the funding to provide low-income families resources they need to live so they can focus on their children going to school.

All the best,

--

Daniel Torrez
Physical Education Teacher
Onate Elementary/Matheson Park Elementary
daniel.torrez@aps.edu
(505) 639-8670

From: [Susan Rivera](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] school calendar
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:52:40 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

Concerning rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

I am an educator in the state of New Mexico and this was brought to my attention via a concerned parent. I am the director of a private school in New Mexico and we must comply with this law. I am beyond thrilled that our students are not subject to the overbearing assessments that the state requires of their students. This rule, however, would affect our families and students. The idea that more seat time equates to more learning is unfounded, scientifically. It also places a huge burden on our enormous population of residents that already suffer with poverty. To eliminate professional development from this plan is a disgrace to every educator nationwide. If you have a workforce of untrained professionals, you can be certain more students will fall further behind as well as the test results. How can we sink below last place? I am not certain but with untrained professionals leading the education of students whose parents are left behind, we can assure that our state will remain in last place. If this rule were to pass, you will be systematically draining our pool of talented professionals. I pray you reconsider this proposal.

--

Blessings,

Susan F. Rivera, M. Ed
Director of School Ministry
Cross of Hope Lutheran Church & School
6104 Taylor Ranch Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
505-897-1832 x110



From: [Joy Thornhill](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:13:31 PM

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The proposed changes are all aimed at increasing instructional time for students and all incidentally DEcrease teacher compensation.

Where is the peer-reviewed research demonstrating that more time in a classroom will result in higher graduation rates? higher reading scores? higher math scores?

WHERE is the data to justify this change? The single most important variable that is driving the "lack of results" is poverty.

The data is IN on poverty in New Mexico.

This proposal of an anti-democratic policy change, based on opinions without sound scientific evidence is ideological impulsiveness, flat out ignorance, or political pandering, and I am OPPOSED.

Joy Thornhill

From: [Sara Newsome](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:22:11 PM
Attachments: [School Calendar requirements.docx](#)

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Good afternoon,

My name is Sara Newsome, I work at Eagle Nest Elementary School, I am also a parent and community member.

Please see attached email in regards to house bill HB-130

To whom it may concern,

In regards to the new school calendar requirements being implemented I as a teacher, parent and community member do not agree with this being beneficial to our district. Considering that our district would not be able to fund this is a huge red flag. In an announcement previously sent out it was stated that in order to make this happen our school would require an additional \$1.6 million. This amount includes, paying the staff, transportation, food services, utilities, ect. It states that staff contracts would have to increase by 37 days. PED is not funding this, so my question here is, where would that money come from? What kind of cuts are our schools going to have to make in order to make this happen? And to what extent are we willing to have to make these changes? We would most likely take a major loss. I personally cannot afford a pay cut and to work an extra day that would not be funded. With that being said I do believe that not paying our teachers for the hard work that is done would most likely lead to a substantial loss of educators. Not to mention the fact that some teachers, who have the most experience would have the opportunity to retire early, which again would lead to a loss of staff. With lack of funding it seems as though it would be more detrimental than beneficial to put this rule in place.

Due to having small classes our kids are not just a number like they are in bigger districts, Our teachers and students have very strong relationships, it would be a disappointment if staff was pushed away due to the lack of funding. There are not many people that I know that would be willing and/or able to work an extra day and not get some sort of compensation. If our district is not able to fund this I am extremely unsure as to how this would be promising for our schools.

My next point would be that a majority of our kids participate in out of school activities such as skiing and snowboarding. I would say at least 80% of our students (in Eagle Nest) are on ski/snowboard team in the winter time which falls on a Monday. If that was no longer an option for them that would be very disappointing. As parents we all want to see our children strive in the things that they enjoy, this would limit that time they get to do those things. Our schools have always been extremely open and supportive of our students outside of school. They even changed spring break dates to allow the opportunity for students to compete in USASA national competitions which a lot of our kids are very much invested in. How would taking something that we all love away help our community? We are very family oriented and I do not see many people agreeing with this being something that would benefit our community, our lifestyles, or our children. I believe that the extra day off does help our kids emotionally and mentally. School is unfortunately not everyone's favorite thing and adding more stress to the kids would not help them in the way that people think. Not to mention the schools in our district are already ranked in the top 10-25% in the state, so it is not like we are lacking when it comes to the education of our students. Also, If they lost the opportunity to do activities outside of school, that emotional distress would definitely be significant. Sure, plenty of other schools do this but the thing is we are a very small tight knit community, we are not like most schools. Four

day school weeks have ALWAYS been a thing, I don't understand how making this sudden change to our lifestyles would do any good.

Another important thing to take into consideration that affects both teachers and students is medical appointments. We have to travel for any medical, counseling, and dentist appointments, so having that Monday allows us to not have to miss school or pull children from instructional days for those appointments. This would lead to more absences from both staff and students.

I really hope that all of these important points that are being expressed by teachers, parents, and community members are being strongly considered. It would be quite disappointing and damaging to our community if our school districts were required to make such changes.

Kind regards,

Sara Newsome

From: [Terry Merrell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMPED "proposed" changes in the 6.10.5
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:29:09 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed rule change that would require a minimum number of school days per year versus the current minimum hour requirement.

Being a rural school district having a 4 day school week is beneficial in many ways. I am confident you are aware of the reason why this is very helpful in a rural district. It's more environmentally responsible as well. Furthermore, running buses and utility cost savings are another reason. As we all know the only other places to cut costs is staffing. If money has to be allocated for this extra day's operating expenses we all know it will likely lead to staff cuts which will only make things worse.

I am aware of how poorly New Mexico ranks for education and certainly understand the belief that more school time would seemingly benefit students. However, from my perspective, more of something that doesn't work isn't a solution.

My son is an all A student who continuously tests above his grade level. The system in place works well for him. However, he is a dedicated student and as his parents we have created a home environment that supports his work ethic.

From what he reports, there are too many students that simply do not care, put forth no effort, and their parents do not hold them accountable. His complaint is there are students who are very disruptive in class and it creates a poor learning environment. They are beyond the ability of a teacher to manage and provide proper instruction to the students who are there to grow and learn. Another day per week of school will have no effect and essentially punishes the students that thrive with this system. Those disruptive students need interventional assistance. They need specialized help. Requiring an extra day of standard education is not the answer.

Education should be more focused on quality, not quantity. The problem with low scores is not the school administrators or teachers failures. They put in long hours and tremendous efforts but they can't instill values that can only come from parents. Sadly, for many of these families they see school as something they participate in because attending school is the state law and or they see it as babysitting. Teachers should not be expected to be babysitters and the mandate of a 5 day school week just makes those teachers babysit an extra day when they could be using the time for planning and preparation. Some of them could take the day and serve as interventional specialists for the students who really would grow and benefit from such a program.

I also understand something needs to be done. The poor performance on standardized testing is proof that the current systems is a failure. I would propose the extra hours/days be required for students that truly need the extra work. Create and fund an intervention program that would require students that are not successful and do not meet expected grade levels for standardized testing. Also, mandate a maximum class size and give funds to schools to hire additional staff. A class of 30 with a professional teacher and an aid is still 30 students per teacher. It is asking too much of the teachers to both provide a quality learning environment to the dedicated students while trying to keep struggling disruptive students focused. It not only doesn't help the students that need specialized attention, it holds back the dedicated students. If the dedicated students didn't have to "wait" for those that are disruptive, I am confident their good test scores could become great test scores. This move to more school days only poorly attempts to treat the symptoms and ignores curing the disease.

The struggling kids don't need more of the same. They need specialized attention and intervention to improve.

The kids that really work hard benefit greatly from the 4 day week. It gives them an extra day to decompress and pursue other interests. The robotics and Science Olympiad program is held on Mondays, the day that is typically not a school day here. If the mandate changes to 5 day school weeks happens, that will become an after school program, adding 2 hours for each program after school. Many of the students travel as much as 2 hours to get to school. For them, this would mean getting home with little more time than to go to bed. This is just one example of why a 4 day school week benefits rural districts.

Please go back to the drawing board and abandon this “easy” approach. It won’t work.

Kind regards,

Terry Merrell
29 Aspen
Mayhill, NM
88339
314-393-2276

Sent from my iPad

From: [Jerry Trujillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Velia Perales](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 days a wk school schedule
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:30:58 PM

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To whom it may concern

I have a 3yr old in Pre-K 3 and 5 days a week would be to much for him I think having the 3 days off helps them in not over loading them with information therefore helping them to retain what they learned during the days at school. With them doing all day, adding another day would be to much for him and may cause disruption and a delay in what he is learning already as it would be to much he needs to retain! Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you
Jerry Trujillo

From: [Brenna McJimsey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:39:33 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am writing today to comment on Rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. This is a significant change from what was originally passed and I think this is wrong and do not want this to happen.

Thank you for your time,

Brenna McJimsey
School Counselor

From: [Debre Allen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:42:59 PM

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Dear sir: I write to PROTEST proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC. "Please REJECT 10 days of professional development added to the school calendar. We already have enough professional development. Additional professional development does not develop professionals. Making the job tolerable for those professionals is what develops professionals.

What will actually improve student outcomes is lessening administrative burdens on teachers, reducing class sizes, incentivizing experts and experienced teachers to stay in the job, desegregating schools, improving student attendance, alleviating the bus driver shortage, unionizing principals so they can have honest discourse with district leadership, and reducing reliance on E2020 and credit recovery workarounds."

Sincerely,

Debre W. Allen

World History; Government/Economics

*Portable Four (4) - Prep Period Six (6)
Capital High School, Santa Fe, New Mexico*

LEARNER ∞ INDIVIDUALIZATION ∞ STRATEGIC ∞ IDEATION ∞ INPUT



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From: [Victoria Vigil](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:47:25 PM

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from the desk of

Victoria Ford Vigil

December 8, 2023

RE: PED Rule for Instructional Time / School Calendar Requirements

Dear Senator Pete Campos and Representative Joseph Sanchez,

I am not a native New Mexican, but am proud to have called it home for over 13 years. Having lived in metropolitan cities across the country, I am especially delighted to live in northeastern New Mexico, where communities have rich culture and traditions, where neighbors know their neighbors, and where communities celebrate and have so much pride in the schools and school children.

It was brought to my attention that New Mexico PED is looking to drastically restructure the policies of its schools and their local authority of their districts, particularly around school calendar requirements and authority of school board/superintendents. I am not a parent, but I am an employee of Cimarron Municipal Schools. I love working with students and watching them grow and learn and explore! I am a volunteer fire fighter and am active in my church. Community involvement is paramount in our rural communities. We see the needs of our communities, villages, towns, and cities, and we are poised to best respond, seek assistance, and serve each other.

In particular, Cimarron Municipal Schools saw a need over 50 years ago. This community, not NM PED, not the governor, not congressional representatives, but this village self-determined that the 5-day model of school was not serving students, staff, and the district's tax-payer base with the greatest return on investment. It was the first school district nationally to move away from the 5-day school week and successfully provide a condensed 4-Day School schedule. This model is now and has been a necessary part of our rural life and culture.

A 4-Day School Week has many benefits. I imagine my colleagues who've been working at the school far longer than I, my neighbors who have sent their children to schools in the district, and even other transplants like me who hadn't experienced the 4-day model before coming here may all tell you far better than I the value of our model, so I would like to bullet point a few significant benefits from a former urbanite:

- allows families and staff to address medical appointments and other "big city" errands on a day that will not compromise student education, whether that's

students missing school or staff who may or may not be able to find a sub not providing education to their students;

- provides a day for inservice for school staff without causing additional child care needs for families, a common issue for my working siblings when their children's school is cancelled for parent teacher conferences or other school inservice;

- makes living and working in a rural area more attractive, as there is no public transit, resulting in over 320 miles a week for (only) commuting to work for me, instead of 400; (the county office is also 4-days a week, so my husband commutes 440 miles for work instead of 550miles);

- gives students, teachers, and other district staff part of their week back after spending hours commuting, whether by bus or personal vehicle – this promotes health and well-being, reduces stress, and mitigates burn out.

I know that statistically our school and others that use the 4-day model are doing well, so I can't quite wrap my head around an argument to fix what isn't broken. New Mexico is an enchanting state, but it is not homogenous! We honor and respect our differences across the state and should not be moving in a direction that disregards our cultural diversity! One-size-fits-all is not the approach we need to adopt with something like calendar, but makes sense for standards. Do not take away our self-determination and autonomy! Providing education and training for our leadership, for our superintendents, for our school boards, for our teachers – this is an appropriate way to influence and inform our decision makers to determine what is best and appropriate for our school districts. Taking our autonomy away would be detrimental to everybody impacted by our education system – not just students, not just their families, not just the staff, but the whole economy.

I believe NM PED can do better in its policy development and needs to try again. Please align yourself with your constituents, and ask NM PED to do better, to come up with a plan that supports our students' education, that supports our local self-determination, that supports the diversity of our enchanting state! Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I appreciate that if you made it this far in reading, you do care about the impact of this rule change.

Sincerely,

Victoria Ford Vigil

Victoria Ford Vigil

Cc: NM PED Policy & Legislative Affairs Division
Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham

11 Horse Thief Gap Rd • Miami, NM 87729
vvigil@cimarronschools.org

Tori Vigil
Librarian / Interventionist
Cimarron Elementary / Middle School
575.376.2512 x319

From: [Garratt, Joy](#)
To: [Goldie Jimenez](#)
Cc: [Alcon, Eliseo Lee](#); [anthony.allison@nmlegis.gov](#); [Janelle Anyanonu](#); [gail@gailfornewmexico.com](#); [Block, John](#); [Borrego, Cynthia](#); [c.brown.nm55@gmail.com](#); [Cadena, Micaela](#); [ambrose.castellano@nmlegis.gov](#); [Cates, Kathleen](#); [Chasey, Gail](#); [jack.chatfield@nmlegis.gov](#); [Chavez, Eleanor](#); [DeLaCruz, Art](#); [Dixon, Meredith](#); [Duncan, Mark](#); [Ferrary, Joanne J.](#); [Figueroa, Natalie](#); [Gallegos, Doreen Y.](#); [hgarcia69](#); [Garcia, Miguel P.](#); [JasonHarperNM](#); [joshua.hernandez](#); [pamelya.herndon@nmlegis.gov](#); [dayan.hochman-vigil@nmlegis.gov](#); [Jaramillo, Tara](#); [Johnson, Wonda D.](#); [Jones, Jenifer](#); [ryan@laneforliberty.com](#); [raymundo.lara@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lente, Derrick L.](#); [Lord, Stefani](#); [Lujan, Tara](#); [Lundstrom, Patricia A.](#); [Madrid, Willie](#); [Martinez, Alan](#); [Martinez, Javier](#); [Mason, Jimmy](#); [McQueen, Matthew](#); [MirabalMoya, Tanya](#); [Montoya, Rod](#); [Nibert, Greg](#); [kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pettigrew, Randall](#); [Reeb, Andrea](#); [andrea@andrearomero.com](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#); [Roybal Caballero, Patricia](#); [Rubio, Angelica](#); [joseph.sanchez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Sarinana, Debra M.](#); [Scott, Larry R.](#); [Serrato, Linda](#); [Small, Nathan P.](#); [Reena.Szczepanski@nmlegis.gov](#); [Terrazas, Luis](#); [Thomson, Elizabeth](#); [townsend@pvt.net](#); [Vincent, Harlan](#); [martin.zamora@nmlegis.gov](#); [Baca, Gregory A.](#); [Brandt, Craig W.](#); [Burt, William F.](#); [Campos, Pete](#); [joseph.cervantes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Maestas, Antonio](#); [crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov](#); [katy.duhigg@nmlegis.gov](#); [david@ramirezandsonsinc.com](#); [Gonzales, Roberto J.](#); [Griggs, Ron](#); [carrie.hamblen@nmlegis.gov](#); [siah.hemphill](#); [martin.hickey@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ivey-Soto, Daniel](#); [Jaramillo, Leo](#); [Kernan, Gay](#); [Lopez, Linda M.](#); [McKenna, Brenda](#); [Moore, Mark](#); [George Munoz](#); [Neville, Steven P.](#); [bill@billoneill4nm.com](#); [Ortiz y Pino, Gerald](#); [Padilla, Michael](#); [shannon.pinto@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pirtle, Cliff R.](#); [harold.popejr](#); [lstepanics@msn.com](#); [Rodriguez, Nancy](#); [Steinborn, Jeff](#); [jas4nm@gmail.com](#); [Stewart, Mimi](#); [Schmedes, Gregg](#); [Tallman, Bill](#); [a.sedillolopez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Wirth, Peter](#); [Sharer, William E.](#); [Woods, Pat](#); [Shendo, Benny](#); [Soules, William P.](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: Re: [EXT] Oppose Mandatory 5 Day School Week
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:50:36 PM

Thank you for writing, Goldie!

I oppose mandating a five day week or even a mandate that 50% of the weeks must be five day weeks. I sponsored the bill that left it up to districts to determine with their local stakeholders how to meet the requirements for instructional hours.

Sincerely,

Rep. Joy Garratt

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 8, 2023, at 12:57 PM, Goldie Jimenez <gjimenez@floydbroncos.com> wrote:

NM State Legislator:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day week within our educational system. As a concerned citizen and educator deeply invested in the welfare of our schools and communities, I implore you to reconsider this change for several critical reasons.

Firstly, the shift to a 5-day week risks the premature retirement of dedicated educators who have structured their lives around the current schedule. Many seasoned teachers have adapted their personal and professional commitments to the 4-day format, and altering this could force them into an unwelcome early exit from their careers, causing a significant loss of experience and expertise in our schools.

Moreover, the potential loss of qualified staff is a genuine concern. The appeal of a 4-day week has attracted skilled educators to our district, contributing to its strength and success. Reverting to a 5-day model risks losing these valuable professionals, impacting the quality of education offered to our students.

Additionally, the transition may lead to a decline in student enrollment. Families have chosen our district based on the unique structure and benefits of a 4-day school week. Altering this could prompt families to seek alternatives, resulting in a loss of students and associated funding.

It's important to note that current data has demonstrated the success of schools operating on a 4-day schedule. These institutions have shown high performance, indicating that the current system is effective in fostering academic achievement and student success.

Furthermore, the financial implications of this change cannot be ignored. The costs associated with reverting to a 5-day week—such as increased transportation, utility expenses, and operational overhead—will strain the budget. This allocation of resources away from educational programs and other critical areas could detrimentally affect the holistic development of our students.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to consider the long-term impact on educators, students, and the overall educational quality before proceeding with this proposed change. Instead, let us focus on supporting and enhancing the successful 4-day model that has proven to benefit our local community and its educational goals.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. I trust that your decision will prioritize the best interests of our educators, students, and the educational system as a whole.

Sincerely,

Goldie Jimenez

Elida, NM

gjimenez@floydbroncos.com

From: [Beth Reecer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:53:19 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Elizabeth Aragon, and I am a New Mexico teacher. I have been teaching within the APS School District for the last 8 years. I have taught all grade levels K-5, and have taught a diverse group of hundreds of students. I am TESOL endorsed and a Union Fed Rep for my school. I hope my extensive experience allows you to hear my voice loud and clear.

Upon hearing the news that the PED would like to once again extend the school year, I was overwhelmed with a sense of hopelessness and frustration. It is obvious that the country as a whole has a broken public education system. What is not obvious is why we are not addressing the real issues and listening to the individuals who are closest to the problem. Instead, inexperienced, non-educators are pointing fingers and placing blame on the only people who see the issues for what they truly are.

We, as teachers, have worked tirelessly to be heard. We've raised our voices and screamed that students are struggling. But we are always answered with the same solutions; more hours, more work, and less support for ourselves and our students.

First and foremost, I do not believe the solution to our problem as a public school system in New Mexico, is to add additional days to our already heavy schedule. Instead, I believe the best solutions are to provide our most vulnerable populations with the best possible support. One of our biggest issues is absenteeism. Teachers simply cannot teach students that are not there, even with additional days added to our calendar. Students need consistency, and when they are missing weeks at a time, or missing every Friday consistently, we cannot provide them with the consistent education that they so desperately need.

In a recent article, Dr. Romero called for accountability. But where does that accountability lie for our families and their students? Districts have rid themselves of that accountability, and replaced it with data collection and action plans that have shown to be ineffective. As a school system, we should be funding solutions to this problem. Not adding more school days for our students to miss. We need to hold our families accountable for prioritizing their child's education, enough to seek support, and we need funding to make that support happen. We need quality school buses and drivers to transport students who don't have a vehicle available. We need before and after school programs that support families with difficult work schedules, and people to run them. We need funding to offer parenting classes for families with consistent absenteeism, and other needs to support their children.

Secondly, we need teachers. We need to retain and recruit quality educators who will fight the good fight with those of us still around. Veteran teachers are exhausted and burnt out. New teachers are running for the hills, seeing how poorly we are supported, and the lack of respect we receive from society. We are professionals, who went to college and earned degrees. Some of us are even working after hours to earn more degrees to better our practice. This year's calendar has exhausted us, with repetitive professional development centered around testing

and constant data collection. It has been unorganized, poorly planned, and a waste of time. What teachers need is more time to prepare quality lesson plans that implement the valuable resources that we've been provided with. We need time to plan with our grade level teams to provide engaging and rigorous lessons that fit our student's needs. We need support for students with behavioral and social emotional needs. We need support for students who need extended interventions in math and reading. We need support for our special education programs, to recruit and retain teachers, and resources to support our special education students. We need the respect and cooperation of our school communities.

This support cannot come from adding more to our already full plates. Extending our contracts to 194 days, to include parent teacher conferences (that already lack participation by our families), and more poorly planned professional development, is not the solution to our lack of support. Overworking already exhausted teachers, is asking for a shortage, a shortage our school districts are already struggling to fill. Funding should be provided to retain and hire teachers, support staff, counselors, social workers, and secretaries. We need funding to pay these invaluable people a living wage. Our educators need to feel respected and fulfilled, not exhausted and overworked.

I hope that you take my concerns into consideration as you make this important decision for our school systems. Teachers are your most experienced advocates, and our voices must be heard. As a state, we need to work together to find solutions to the real problems happening in our public schools.

Thank you for your time,
Elizabeth Aragon

From: [Patricia Hunt](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback in regards to 6.10.5 NMAC Calendar
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:58:01 PM

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NM Public Education Department:

Please be advised that as a parent of a Cliff School graduate and a grandmother of 2 current Cliff students, I am profoundly OPPOSED to the Cliff School being returned to a 5 day schedule.

The Cliff School has proven to be academically superior in test scores (both in State and National statistics) using a 4-day calendar that works for rural areas such as here in southwest New Mexico. The present schedule has also improved attendance overall. If you are looking at scholastic ratings for the State overall, you should take a closer look at the real problem: the lack of achievement by the larger schools in urban areas. Requiring more days and hours is not the solution. Upping the caliber of the existing programs, reducing the size of classrooms, increasing teachers resources for providing better materials is more of an answer to solving the problems you are perceiving. They need quality hours not quantity of hours.

I have been reviewing many charts from the Cliff School showing that our scores range higher than State averages and I am sure that rural schools across the State, such as those located in the Lovington area are the same. I am not going to attach these figures to this email because I know of many parents and teachers who feel the same as I do about this matter and that they have already provided you copies of this information. It is enough for me to say that you are trying to fix something that is not broken in our rural schools and you are using problems in other parts of the State as your reasoning to do so.

One other thought is that the majority of our students are bused to school. A 4-day week saves wear and tear on equipment (and the students!) and saves fuel. Operating the facilities of the school grounds and buildings an additional day per week should also be taken into consideration. The rural schools such as Cliff are already operating on thin budgets and changing to a 5-day week would further stretch and strain the money needed to continue to provide what is proven to be an excellent system as evidenced by our test scores.

Opposed to a change in calendar,

Patricia E Hunt
11 McMillen Rd
Silver City, NM 88061
575-534-7649
arroyomangus@gmail.com

From: [Bethany Rinderknecht](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:04:48 PM

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To whom it may concern,

As both an employee of APS and a parent of three APS student's, extending the 23-24 school year would cause significant difficulty and hardship to our family, and I am very much opposed to the proposed PED rule change. If adjustments must be made, please do so for the 2024-2025 school year.

Thank you,
Bethany

--

Bethany Rinderknecht, BSN, RN
School Nurse- L.B. Johnson Middle School
Health Office Hours: 9:15am - 4:15pm
505-898-1492 x 40542
bethany.rinderknecht@aps.edu

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From: [H Jaramillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cobre School District
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:06:32 PM

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Greetings. I post my opposition to require smaller, funding resource hampered schools to equal standards of scheduling the requirements by NMPED. I do submit my opinion on why large incorporated communities have the ample funding to expand educational programs, which seems politically appropriated. The Cobre Schools is one district that is always hampered by financial issues. If the 4 day school schedule attracts professional instructors, as has been proven, leave things alone, if things are working for teachers, students, and parents.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Carri Holler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:08:12 PM

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

As someone deeply invested in our students' academic growth, I wanted to shed light on a crucial matter affecting their success that often goes unnoticed: the challenges beyond the classroom walls.

While the proposition of extending teaching hours might seem a plausible solution to academic struggles, it fails to address the underlying issues plaguing our students. The current landscape sees children increasingly isolated due to electronic babysitters like TVs and video games, hindering their social development. Moreover, inadequate nutrition and chronic absenteeism compound these challenges, impeding their ability to thrive academically.

Placing additional burdens on teachers without the necessary time for preparation, collaboration, and community engagement only exacerbates these problems. This rushed approach compromises the quality of lessons, impedes accurate assessment, and hinders teachers' professional development.

What our students truly need is a holistic approach that addresses these fundamental issues. Encouraging more social interaction, advocating for healthier lifestyles, and fostering a supportive community are pivotal to their success. It's crucial to empower teachers with the time and resources to adapt to evolving educational practices, benefiting both educators and students alike.

Let's focus on initiatives that tackle these root causes rather than merely extending classroom hours. By addressing these challenges collectively, we can pave the way for a brighter future for our students.

From: [Heather Christensen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:10:52 PM

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

This feedback is for 6.10.5 NMAC.

I do not see the benefits of mandating extra days, when we have trouble getting students to attend the current schedule. This is especially problematic because there is virtually no accountability for parents regarding their children's attendance. I would rather see the money spent on more effective educational policies, such as reducing class size or more vocational training opportunities for students. What about ensuring that all schools have a certified librarian? Or improving the quality of food in school lunches? Any of these would be far more effective than simply increasing the number of days students are in school.

From: [Tim kuzdrowski](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on school days
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:33:33 PM

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To whom it may concern

NMPED should not be mandating that school districts be 5 or 4 day it should be up to the local school board and parents /guardians along with the state should not set one shoe fits all for schools across the state for their calendars . This is overreach. The PED ,local districts and parents /guardians should be working together for what is best of our kids and communities

~ Timothy Kuzdrowski
PO BOX 1445
Elephant Butte NM 87935
Sierra County NM

From: [Sarah Stubbs](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 4:02:56 PM

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

My name is Sarah Stubbs and I am the Finance Director for the Portales Municipal School District in Portales, NM. We are on the Eastern side of the state and are 20 miles from the Texas border. I started there in 2006 in the payroll department, then transitioned to Comptroller, then Business Manager, then finally to Director of Finance.

I am the daughter of a teacher and school nurse (and Air Force veteran), the ex-wife of a teacher, and my current husband works in the Technology department at the Portales Municipal School District.

More importantly, I am the mother of a senior at Portales High School and an 8th grader at Portales Junior High School. Both students are gifted. The 8th grader is bilingual, both participate in band and sports. They are smart, intelligent kids who have more common sense than most adults that affect their everyday life.

I have seen firsthand how more time in the classroom DOES NOT work for our students. Both of my kids went through the shutdown of schools during COVID (while we were still required to work in person) and I can say with 100% certainty that our kids and teachers in this state are burned out. Both of my kids are tired. They are tired of longer days, they are tired of being told they are not learning, they are tired of being treated like they don't matter in their educational process. Do you know how many kids we lost to Texas because of the NM Covid response? I do.

The legislature and PED keep pushing more time in the classroom based on studies that were performed outside of our state. Those studies DO NOT have the same demographics of NM. I heard someone say that NM was included in one of the studies. Statistically speaking, our population has no effect these studies by the standard deviation (given as an afterthought). Basically, we are too small to matter in those studies based on our total population. Santa Fe and Albuquerque don't even have the demographics as other cities and towns in NM, yet are constantly making rules and laws that do not help our areas. We are NOT the same as APS, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, or Los Alamos. We are also different on the Eastern side of the state compared to the West, North, and South. My issue is that we keep all being lumped into the same box. Let me be clear, we are not the same.

Portales Schools is a traditional 5 day school District in Roosevelt county, but we are surrounded by 4 day a week schools in our area. We don't meet the needs of those communities so I am grateful they are here to provide those services to their kids and teachers. It is the only way those children get the education they need while being able to travel to the city to get the products, appointments, etc that they cannot get in their areas. It also allows them to recruit staff because we cannot offer the 4 day a week schedule...and we are good with that.

Chronic truancy is NOT remedied by longer time in the classroom or more days in the calendar. It leads to more truancy and more frustration from the students and the teachers

(who's only goal is for kids to learn). That truancy is constantly being thrown in our faces as the problem of the District, but what do you expect to happen when you keep adding more days? It doesn't solve the problem, it just makes it worse.

Politics have no place in our classrooms. This seems like another political ploy to force us to conform without the legislative process which allows us to contact our legislators and offer feedback. Stop pretending like there isn't a political agenda here. Our kids and staff well-being, health, and education should not be the backbone for idiocracy.

Education is expensive. I know because I manage a school District of 2,500 students totaling over \$68M (for this year). Money helps us provide what our children need, but time is just as important. I go to work and my job is to "Educate Children". Even though I am not in the classroom with them, my position affects every one of our students & staff. From the moment the kids get on the bus in the morning, until they get off the bus at the end of the day, The staff from the moment they step on our campus, to paying their bills in their households. EVERYTHING I do affects them all and I take my job very seriously because I love it.

The answer is NOT more days in the classroom. The adults need to do better.

Thank you,

Sarah M. Stubbs, MBA, SFO, SBO II, and CPO

Director of Finance

Portales Municipal Schools

www.portaleschools.com

(575) 356-7000

Fax (575) 356-4377



Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. ~~~ Leo Buscaglia

From: [Cyndie Patrick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 days
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 4:11:39 PM

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

TO: PED

FROM: Cyndie Ives, NBCT, MA Elementary Ed, Special Education Head Teacher

I am very disappointed with this proposed rule change of forcing districts to develop a calendar of 180 school days. Here are some reasons why I'm opposed:

1. After Yazzie/Martinez pointed out that our state is falling short when it comes to disadvantaged students, PED now expects rural districts to further alienate our students. We already have attendance issues across the state, and this new law will further exasperate this problem as students will be on the bus for hours 5 days a week instead of 4. In addition, it seems districts will need to take out some of the breaks that students and teachers desperately need to recharge, in order to meet this requirement. Again, attendance problems will not be healed with this change.

2. I am a veteran teacher who is very comfortable with the CCSS as well as my district's curricula. However, I am currently, and have been, a mentor to many new teachers. One of the things that I have found over the years that keeps new teachers in our profession is their confidence with CCSS, curricula, and classroom management. How do new teachers gain this confidence? Of course, teachers learn a lot of this through professional development. This confidence needs to be acquired during the course of their career as curricula and student needs change. Therefore, the state legislature worked hard to meet the needs of teachers, to try to retain them to the profession, by building in PD time within the 1140.

3. Districts worked really hard around the state to create calendars that worked for their specific communities based on the new law of 1140. It seems that you are undermining all of the

work that districts did to find what works best for the communities they serve. Many had community meetings, surveys, and several drafts of calendars for school communities to choose from. Please don't put all that hard work to waste! We still haven't found calendars that truly work yet with the 1140 as they will need to be revised to work better next year. We need time to implement that first before you throw another wrench in the spoke. Trust districts to do what is best for the students they serve.

4. I am very disappointed that the Governor that I worked hard to help elect twice and the cabinet that she has appointed would be so demeaning to the students and teachers they supposedly support wholeheartedly! If you would like the republicans to win in the future, keep alienating teachers, parents, and students. Do you know how many of these school community members voted for Susana Martinez? I remember both of those elections very well and know how hard it was to convince educators and educator friends that she did not have their best interest.

In closing, please do not push this rule of 180 days through. Please respect the NM State Legislature and the law they enacted. Please trust districts to choose how best to implement the new law of 1140 for their unique communities. Please work to increase student attendance and retain teachers!

Thank you.

From: [Jolinda Mapp](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:32:35 PM

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

I am writing to you today in regards to the proposed amendment to 6.10.5 NMAC.

For the last 43 years Dora Consolidated Schools has operated under a 4-day calendar. In the beginning our school district chose this structure due to high fuel and energy costs. While those are still valid reasons in today's economy, our community has found many other benefits to this calendar.

Absenteeism is often a problem for schools. Our 4-day calendar helps lessen some avoidable absences by giving staff, students and their families a day each week in which they can schedule doctor appointments and other necessary meetings. It has also lessened the number of absences due to students traveling for the rodeos and other sports our students and their families enjoy. Many can agree that family is important and a vital part of a students success both in school and throughout life. Our 4-day calendar allows families to have more time together for work and recreation.

Agriculture is still one of the foremost industries in our area and we are proud to be able to work alongside our children teaching them to be able to continue the work the way our parents and grandparents did with us. The 4-day week allows our students to be involved in more of the day to day operations. I believe this has allowed this area to continue to keep the agricultural community going where it has all but been eliminated in many areas of our country. The students are taught valuable real-world lessons that are not found in the typical instructional setting. Our children are taught to have a strong work-ethic. The 4-day week allows them to find jobs that they would not otherwise be able to have if they were in school for the proposed 5-day week.

Despite having an extra day "off" from school, they are still receiving 1,140 hours of instruction per year. Their math and reading proficiency scores are higher than the state average ranking in the top 20% for New Mexico public schools. We have over 40 years of success with this system. Changing it now would only impose significant hardship upon the schools and families financially and logistically. I ask that you consider allowing the school districts to continue to set their calendars in the ways that they have shown to work.

Thank you,
Jolinda Mapp

From: [Melissa Renee Yates](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:57:12 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 disagree with making the rural areas of New Mexico going from a four-day school week to a five-day school week. There are many benefits that come to our smaller communities with the four-day school week. The students miss less school for appointments, they can take part in more activities, and can also help with family businesses or agricultural businesses.

When living in small rural communities we often must travel out of town for doctor's appointments. Depending on the area of travel this could be anywhere from a half an hour to an hour and a half for the area I live in. That would mean a child could miss anywhere from half of a day to a full day of school just for a doctor's appointment. When there are four-day school week doctors' appointments can be scheduled on that day off from school.

Longer practices for sports can also be scheduled for the extra day off during the school week. Allowing the kids more study time during the school week.

There are also many small family-owned businesses in our smaller rural communities. They often use the help of their teenagers to help with the family business or children in these communities also work to help in today's income in today's struggling economy. This allows some of these kids to also work in their family-owned businesses, their own jobs, or on family farms and ranches.

I can also use my own child as an example of how I have watched her flourish since joining a smaller community school and having the four-day school week. She moved from Carlsbad to Cloudcroft, and I have watched not only her grades rise but also her enthusiasm for school.

Again, with all, I do not agree with HB130 and the choice to force smaller rural communities to go from a four-day school week that many have done for years to now a day school week. I believe it will not only hinder the lives of the community but most of all our children and their education.

Sincerely,

Melissa Yates
Cloudcroft New Mexico

From: [Christina Joyce](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: going 5 days a week. Our child has severe anxiety and other issues the 4 day week is very helpful. She has enough trouble making 4 days most weeks 5 would make her have more absences.
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:18:49 PM

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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.

From: [Carol Howard](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four day school yes. No change
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:42:51 PM

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To whom it may concern;

I have been in the public education system for close to twenty years in New Mexico and I have experience in four different schools. I have worked in four and five day school weeks. I would like to state very clearly why I am not for any changes to the present four day schools.

- 1.) **Financially smart.** Wow imagine saving money and using it for the students. The distance and time to get to as well from school simply adds up with New Mexico wide open spaces. Four day schools save money clearly with gas, and wear on vehicles.
- 2.) **Time.** Family, community, and school are part of each other. Using time wisely and not wasting it has worked. The health benefits for students resting, and having time to be with their families or for out of school activities is important. Don;t forget not all learning and development is in the classroom. Never has, never should be.
- 3.) **Test scores or academic excellence.** I have the great pleasure to see high standards academically set and achieved in our four day school week.

I am happy to speak with anyone to expand on my reasons why the government does not need to change what is working.

Myself and many other tax paying, hard working, highly concerned individuals do not vote for this. Waste of time, money and focus as to what matters, our students. NO, NO, NO to five day week.

Sincerely,
Carol Lynn Howard
Educator for 19.5 years in New Mexico.
B.S., M.A., & M.S.

From: [Wade Frazee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for:
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:38:43 PM

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Extending the school year and/or days in school will do absolutely nothing positive for our students. It's not the hours or days spent inside the wall of a school that makes the impact. It's what is done in those hours and days. This would also effectively put an end to the four day week that a lot of small schools utilize to great benefit to their students. There isn't one single area where the four day a week schools do not excel over the five day a week schools....academically, extra-curricular activities, discipline, truancy cost effectiveness, etc. Not one draw back. None. Why in the world would we want to impose this on schools that are excelling above nearly all of the rest?

This is just a case of the PED wanting more power and control. They are an unelected group who does the bidding of the governor and they are usurping the elected legislature. It's time for the people of New Mexico to stand up to these people in defense of our children.

Sincerely,
Wade Frazee
Public Educator with 31 years of experience

From: lakin1lizzie@gmail.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 12:00:47 AM

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As a native New Mexican, I attended both a 5 day and 4 day school district. Attending a school that had a four day schedule opened up many opportunities for me. I found that teachers were more attentive and enthusiastic when on a four day schedule. My grades improved, I was able to be involved in extracurricular activities, and I was able to take pride in my school. 85% of schools on a four day schedule are considered efficient according to your standards. If the wheel is not broken, there is no need to fix it. Instead of punishing rural schools, the PED should work to bring suburban and urban districts up to par with what rural schools are able to achieve. This can be achieved by allowing districts to make decisions based on what they feel their students need. The PED is not able to form relationships with students in the same way teachers and administrators can. Education is NOT one size fits all. It is vital that the PED gives school districts the freedom to decide on these matters with their students in mind. Our students are more than just a number. It is time to treat them as such and make their voices heard as well. I oppose HB 130.

From: [scott darsee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Absolutely not- teachers are struggling financially and will the profession.
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 7:24:44 AM

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Dear New Mexico Public Education Department,

Rule 6.10.5NMAC adding 26 work days for teachers will hurt us all.

Teachers will be unable to supplement their low wages with other income, will hasten even greater burn out and make the profession unattractive to younger people.

Existing teachers will leave.

Our State already struggles filling teaching jobs. New Mexico is already ranked low in education statistics nationally.

I have been appalled by cuts in education over the last 50 years, and I believe our present society reflects that. We need a stronger, more functional public basic education structure, not one that further weakens our core foundation- which is our dedicated teachers.

I strongly oppose this change.

I am not a teacher partially because I saw my father struggle to support our family. I have watched friends struggle who are excellent teachers, well-educated and committed.

I ask you this: why would anyone WANT to be a teacher?

If you value our present teachers- rule 6.10.5NMAC is a mistake.

Sincerely,
Scott Darsee
Johanna Hongell-Darsee
7204 Minehead St, NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

From: [Prescilla Tafoya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 and 6.19.4.1
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 10:23:27 AM

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Good morning,

I am a parent of a 9th grader and soon to be kindergartener and I do not think that it right to extend the school days to 5 days a week. Our teachers are already low paid and burnt out. My child has All A's and a B every year in attending a 4 day a week school. He has strived since moving him out of the PED where they attended school for 5 days a week. The teachers have training days which is shown to help better the students. If they did not have those training days as often on Fridays as they do, I feel like my child would not be thriving.

A 4 day week is better for all students mental health because they have more time to rest and process what they learned through the week and go back to school at 100% opposed to 50% because of the exhaustion of a 5 day week. And I'm sure for the education staff, teachers and faculty feel the same. Everytime I have gone into my child's school you do not see the burnout in the faculty the way I did at my child's previous school. One of the classes my son was in at a 5 day a week school was where they merged 2 grades together. It didn't do any good for him since he was in the 3rd grade and the class was for 2nd and 3rd graders, it set him back a lot because he was relearning 2nd grade work opposed to advancing. Here at the 4 day school there is a teacher for every grade level and they are advancing and preparing them for college and adult life.

On a personal note, solely my choice to help my child strive in his academics, I drive my child 15 minutes away from my house to catch his bus and when he joins sports I drive him 30 minutes away from my home and an hour away from my place of employment. Which equates to 150+ miles per day, depending on the practice times and which sports my child decides to join. Adding an extra day to this would kill me in gas alone. I am a struggling mom who is trying to give my children the best academic experience possible. At that point I might as well home school my children so I can make sure they do not get burnt out in being forced into a 5 day school week. I was also able to adjust my work schedule to fit my children's needs and to spend quality time with them.

Do Not make these changes, I see teachers being burnt out and the PED having issues with teacher retention which has always been a problem even while I was in school at a 5 day a week school, 15 years ago. I see our children being burnt out and dropping out or failing in their classes which doesn't do any justice to our children. This will also put a financial burden on the parents that are like me and go above and beyond for our children so they can strive.

Respectfully,
Prescilla Tafoya

From: [karen.mitchell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4Day weeks of school
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 10:57:00 AM

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone
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I tend to disagree with your studies. I am pretty sure the studies were from all schools not separating 4 day schools from 5 day schools. They are all mixed together so you can say the average is below standards and say the 4 day schools aren't working. I firmly believe you should do separate studies before you compare and say one is better than the other. What works for some schools do not work for others but you want to clump them all together. You are taking away from local districts what works for them. Why do we have superintendents, school boards, teachers and parents if you tell us what we can and cannot do. You talk about teacher burnout and student burnout, take away the 4 day schools that have worked for years for certain communities and change them to fit others lifestyles and learning. And before anyone comments I taught at a large 5 day school for 25 years. I have been substituting in 4 , 4 day schools for 14 years and I can tell you the dropout rate is lower, the graduation rate is higher, the teacher and student morale is way better, all 4 of my schools are high achieving blue ribbon schools. The sports programs are awesome because we don't miss as much school, the students and teachers don't mind that they start earlier and stay later. You want us to individualize student learning but then you're trying to make all schools the same. I would like to see you really rethink this before you mess up so many lives and communities to fit some one else's needs.



From: [Kerstin Winters](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 11:57:46 AM

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I am not in support of the proposed 180-day school year! We educators need support not changes to our working conditions.

Thank you!

Kerstin Winters

New Mexico Pre-K Manzano Mesa Elementary

“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.” Sydney J. Harris

From: markspx@aol.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day a week school schedule
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 1:04:53 PM

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I am against changing to a 5 day school week.

My daughter currently spends over 12 hours a week being transported to and from school. This would place an additional 3 hrs in transportation time on her shoulders. As it is in the winter, she gets on the bus before sunrise, and gets off the bus after the sun sets. When is she supposed to find time to do homework?

I would like to say in closing, I am against changing the 4 day a week to a 5 day a week school schedule

Thank you,

Mark E Lewis
Parent
Quemado Independent School District

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Kristin Johnsson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Regulation 6.10.5 revision
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 1:59:27 PM
Attachments: [Regulation 6 10 5 Dr. Johnsson.pdf](#)

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Dear Council Members or Whom It May Concern,

I've attached my statement in support of maintaining a four-day school week here at Roy Municipal Schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,
Dr. Kristin E. Johnsson

--

Kristin E. Johnsson, Ph.D.
Educator

Dr. Kristin E. Johnsson, Ph.D., Science/Health Educator
Roy Municipal Schools
525 Roosevelt Street
Roy, NM 87743

December 8, 2023

Dear Council Members,

I am writing this letter from both a professional and personal standpoint in support of maintaining a four-day school week here at Roy Municipal Schools.

The number of schools nationwide transitioning from a traditional five-day school week to a four-day school week is growing substantially (National Conference of State Legislatures [NCSL], 2023; Prothero, 2023; Yu, 2023). To date, 25% of Missouri's school districts have adopted a four-day schedule, and over 70 school districts in Texas have switched from a traditional five-day school week to a four-day school week in the past three years (NCSL, 2023). In addition, a recent ABC News article reported that an estimated 1,600 school districts across the nation have switched to a four-day school week in hopes of retaining teachers (Yu, 2023). So, you may ask yourselves, why are they switching? Also, one of the main driving forces behind the switch is to retain teachers, boost student attendance and academic success, and promote professional development for teachers (Jones, 2023).

While school districts around the country are making the switch, many rural schools have been on a four-day school week for decades. Although it was widely implemented in the mid-1970s to conserve energy and operating costs, the benefits of running on a four-day schedule bolstered additional benefits such as improved attendance for both students and teachers, reduced student discipline issues and problems, increased student participation in extracurricular activities, while also allowing for increased innovation, creativity, cohesive support network, and more effective teaching (Hewitt & Denny, 2011). With this said, there has been an increased demand for teachers in rural schools in recent decades, particularly teachers certified in math and science (Ingersoll & Tran, 2023), and switching the school calendar from a four-day school week to a five-day school week is not a solution.

Moreover, the prevailing push by the New Mexico Public Education Department and lawmakers mandating a minimum 180-day school calendar does not consider each school district's demographics and area industry. Most rural schools, including Roy Municipal Schools, are almost solely an agricultural industry-driven community encompassing local farms and ranches that are locally owned and run. A four-day school week has been the backbone of successful student achievement and attendance in our area for decades. A four-day school week is particularly critical in rural school districts that face logistical and financial challenges (Yu, 2023), and many students and teachers in rural schools have farm and ranching responsibilities outside of school.

Lastly, speaking from a personal perspective, I can attest to the benefits of a four-day school week. Students in this school receive a high-quality education while also having the extra time to participate in extracurricular activities and help with family responsibilities. In addition, the students at this school have and continue to perform at a high academic level. In fact, it is one of the highest in the state. The dropout rate is meager, and many students succeed beyond school and contribute to our society.

I sincerely wish that you consider the unique demographics, the agricultural industry, and the unique needs of rural school districts. In particular, school districts, whose base is mainly made up of people who live and work on farms and ranches. Thus, it is only logical that the decision to maintain or change the academic calendar should be up to the individual school districts, not lawmakers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dr. Kristin E. Johnsson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Kristin E. Johnsson, Ph.D.

References

- Hewitt, P. M., & Denny, G. S. (2011). The four-day school week: Impact on student academic performance. *Rural Educator* 32(2), pp. 23-31.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Tran, H. (2023). Teacher shortages and turnover in rural schools in the US: An organizational analysis. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, pp. 1-36. Doi: 10.1177/0013161X231159922
- Jones, A. (2023, September 6). *Texas public school districts make the move to a four-day school week*. <https://www.texasstandard.org/stories/texas-public-school-districts-make-the-move-to-a-four-day-school-week/#:~:text=In%20an%20attempt%20to%20recruit,a%20four%2Dday%20school%20week>.
- National Conference of State Legislature. (2023, June 28). *Four-day school week overview*. <https://www.ncsl.org/education/four-day-school-week-overview>
- Prothero, A. (2023, August 24). *4-day school weeks surge in popularity among American adults*. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/4-day-school-weeks-surge-in-popularity-among-american-adults/2023/08>
- Yu, Y-J. (2023, September 18). *As more schools switch to 4-day weeks, will teachers stay?* <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Family/schools-switching-4-day-weeks-working/story?id=102870420>

From: [Landon Redhair](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 2:45:41 PM

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Hello,

From a current teacher in New Mexico, your attempt to change when we can do our professional development and to tell us we can't do a 4 day school weeks is just another way New Mexico is failing our teachers and students. Is our PDP and Micro Courses not enough for you?

Please change this rule.

From: [Kim Plebani](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 3:54:33 PM

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To the PED,

We do not want more changes to the school year. We do work very hard and put in enough hours and so do our students. You are not in the classroom. We are. Students are just now recovering from the pandemic. Leave us be.

Sincerely,
Kim Plebani

From: kayla.bourassa@rrps.net
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 3:58:38 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am writing to respectfully request that revisions to the school calendar requirements NOT be made. I am an elementary school teacher and a parent and I can tell you that my own children, myself, and my colleagues are already all burned out and we are not even to the halfway point of the school year. Adding extra time (after ALREADY adding extra time this past school year) for things like parent teacher conferences and PD is detrimental to educator morale. We give so much of ourselves to this career and our students because it is our passion, but we just keep getting more and more added to our loads and less and less time. It is unsustainable and I truly believe our state will experience an even greater teacher shortage should these amendments be made.

Thank you for your time. Please consider what is best for all.

Kayla Bourassa
4th Grade Teacher
Rio Rancho Public Schools

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Dani R](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 7:31:15 AM

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To whom it concerns,

Good morning, I am writing you on behalf of the education team of RRPS. Educators do not want another year of changes and upheaval. This proposal would be too strenuous for the teaching staff. They already do so much before, during, and after school. Please vote against this proposal. Thank you taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Danielle Rawlins

From: [Kathleen Weeks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 8:48:36 AM

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Subject: Urgent Consideration: Impact of Removing Four-Day School Week from Rural Districts

To Whom it May Concern:

I trust this email finds you well. My name is Kathleen Weeks, and I am writing again to bring attention to a matter of great importance concerning our rural school districts. Recently, there have been discussions about the possibility of reverting from a four-day school week to a traditional five-day schedule. I would like to highlight the potential detrimental effects such a change could have on our rural communities.

Rural school districts face unique challenges, and the four-day school week has been a valuable tool in addressing some of these issues. I would like to outline several reasons why maintaining the four-day school week is crucial for the well-being and success of our rural schools:

1. ****Resource Allocation:**** Rural districts often grapple with limited resources, including budget constraints and staffing challenges. The four-day school week allows for more efficient resource allocation, minimizing operational costs and ensuring that available funds can be directed toward essential educational needs.
2. ****Teacher Recruitment and Retention:**** Many rural areas struggle to attract and retain qualified educators. The four-day school week has proven to be an attractive feature for teachers, offering a schedule that accommodates commuting challenges and provides a better work-life balance. Removing this incentive may exacerbate existing difficulties in hiring and keeping talented teachers in our rural schools.
3. ****Student Attendance and Engagement:**** The longer school days on a four-day schedule often result in improved attendance rates and increased student engagement. Students and families appreciate the flexibility provided by the three-day weekends, allowing for extracurricular activities, family time, and additional opportunities for learning outside the traditional classroom setting.
4. ****Community Involvement:**** The four-day school week fosters stronger ties between schools and the community. It enables parents, community members, and local businesses to actively participate in school activities, leading to a more integrated and supportive educational environment.
5. ****Economic Impact:**** The four-day school week contributes to the local economy by providing families with an extra day for shopping, recreation, and other activities. This helps boost local businesses and enhances the overall economic stability of rural communities.

I urge you to carefully consider the potential negative consequences of eliminating the four-

day school week in our rural districts. While I understand the need for thorough evaluation and improvement in our educational systems, it is essential to recognize the unique circumstances and benefits that the current schedule provides to these communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter. I am confident that a thoughtful and collaborative approach will lead to solutions that prioritize the best interests of our rural schools and the students they serve.

Sincerely,

--

Katie Weeks
4th Grade Teacher
Stapleton Elementary School
kathleen.weeks@rrps.net

Parent Resources- <https://sites.google.com/rrps.net/onlineeducationalresources/home>

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From: [Kathleen Weeks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 8:48:37 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 hope this email finds you well. My name is Kathleen Weeks, and I am writing to bring to your attention a matter of significant concern among educators in our state. As a teacher and a parent of four children in Rio Rancho Public Schools. I have observed the dedication and hard work that our teachers consistently put into educating our children. I understand the importance of ensuring the best learning environment for students and the commitment of our teachers to their profession.

The purpose of this email is to address the issue of teachers being required to work additional hours beyond their contractual obligations. While we appreciate the tireless efforts of our educators, it is crucial to recognize the impact that extended work hours can have on their well-being, job satisfaction, and ultimately, the quality of education they provide.

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our society, and their work extends far beyond the time spent in the classroom. The demands of lesson planning, grading, professional development, and extracurricular activities are already substantial. Expecting teachers to consistently work beyond their contractual hours can lead to burnout, increased stress levels, and a decline in overall job satisfaction.

Moreover, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for the well-being of our educators. By respecting the contractual hours agreed upon, we promote a culture that values and supports the personal lives of teachers, allowing them to recharge and bring their best selves to the classroom each day.

I understand that there may be occasional circumstances that require additional work hours, such as special projects, events, or unexpected challenges. However, a consistent expectation of extra hours can negatively impact the morale of the teaching staff.

I kindly request that the New Mexico Public Education Department consider the importance of ensuring reasonable working conditions for our teachers. By valuing and respecting their contractual hours, we can contribute to a more sustainable and fulfilling work environment, ultimately benefiting both educators and students.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am hopeful that, together, we can create a supportive and nurturing educational environment for all stakeholders.

Sincerely,

--

Katie Weeks
4th Grade Teacher
Stapleton Elementary School

kathleen.weeks@rrps.net

Parent Resources- <https://sites.google.com/rrps.net/onlineeducationalresources/home>

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From: [Tania Hopkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against Rule Change 6.10.5
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 9:46:16 AM

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To NM Public Education Department,

I am an Albuquerque Public Schools educator and parent who is **opposed to the proposed Rule Change 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements.**

We value the additional funding for education, but more of the same will NOT produce better results.

What will happen if NM PED implements this rule change?

- Student attendance will decline, especially in rural NM where 4 day weeks are essential.
- Educators will retire early, leave NM and less will join the profession, leaving even more students with substitutes. More days of unqualified educators will not improve outcomes. (Both of my middle school children have been without a licensed teacher for the majority of this school year.)
- More families who have resources will leave public neighborhood schools, worsening our already segregated system and leaving educators with extremely difficult classes, made up of the students who are the most in need of strong community support and peer models.

What would be a better use of educational funding?

- ASK EDUCATORS AND FAMILIES WHAT WE NEED AND LISTEN?
- Fully fund these support staff in all schools: community school coordinators, counselors, social workers, occupational therapists, nurses and behavioral support staff.
- Support our most qualified administration and educators, especially special educators, with salary incentives and paid time to collaborate and prepare within the SB 1,140 hours in schools with the highest percentages of students who fit the Yazzie-Martinez demographic .
- Work with the legislature to cap charter school growth within a district to no more than 10% of the district population and begin the process of transforming successful charter schools into magnet schools so they do not continue to become an escape largely for families with means.
- Fully fund additional social services to support families in crisis so they can get their children to school.

I urge you to reconsider this disastrous proposal and to implement the above strategies. We appreciate your responsiveness to NM community needs.

Respectfully,

Tania Hopkins

From: [Gail Williams](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for:
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 2:57:40 PM

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PED's rules regarding calendar and accreditation:

What's wrong with NMPED? Too much bureaucracy! And these rules just seem like more.

An example: In the last legislative session, a state senator designated funding in the Junior Bill for a 'brain education' program. I am part of a project to introduce "Brain Education" into the public schools and we worked with the senator to propose the funding through the NMPED. So that was at the beginning of March. Since that time, we have spent many hours meeting with principals in different districts and with school district administration to introduce BE and to get buy-in for the project, and to schedule with them for training times beginning with a main training on Jan 2, 2024.

Meanwhile, what has happened with the funding. Nothing. It has fallen into the black hole of bureaucracy. Through an aide of the senator, we have found out the potential funding has gone from the fiscal side to the program side,(whoopie) but it hasn't yet even made it to an REC so that they can create an RFP. And the REC has said that even if they were to get it in the beginning of Dec, they could not process it until after the holiday break. So now all of our scheduling has to be rescheduled if that is even possible now to coordinate with all of the different schools which have committed to this project. So a pot of money that could potentially fund an exciting project to improve a number of NM schools, their teachers, staff, students and their families will likely not be available in time to fully implement and complete the project. A pot of money that was allocated nine months ago.

Bureaucracy tends to feed and justify its own aggrandisement and these new rules on calendar and accreditation seem like a perfect example.

From: [Alison Sabatino](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 3:08:07 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing about the proposed rule of a 180 day school year minimum, and an additional two weeks of professional development days for teachers. I am a teacher at Santa Fe Public Schools. I also have a five-year-old son that attends kindergarten at the school where I teach. As both a teacher and a parent, I oppose this rule for the following reasons.

-My school district has already met the new requirement for additional hours. We are able to provide the required hours in 176 school days. We also already have many hours of professional development-weekly grade-level PLCs, monthly district PLCs, and many hours of our own time completing LETRS training. More days will just lead to teacher and student burnout and lower teacher morale. Already, it seems like the state is assuming a lack of teacher knowledge is the problem, instead of other factors like a high rate of poverty in the state.

-My district currently has a teacher shortage, substitute shortage, and bus driver shortage. Adding days to the calendar simply doesn't make sense when districts are so understaffed.

-The absenteeism in the state is alarmingly high. A recent article in the Santa Fe New Mexican spotlighted this. Instead of requiring more days, resources should be utilized to help improve attendance for the days school is already in session.

-Now that my child is school age, I no longer have childcare. If I have two extra weeks of work, I will need to secure and pay for childcare, which is an additional financial burden to place on school staff.

For the above reasons, I hope the PED will honor what the legislature decided last year-letting districts decide on the calendar while also meeting the required instructional hours.

Sincerely,
Alison Sabatino

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Garret Archibeck](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 4:45:45 PM

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

Hello,

I am sending this note in opposition to this arbitrary decision to add more days to the school year. This rule is so very irritating. Does the PED not get teachers? This feels like a slap in the face. Previous legislation that extended the year seemed like a waste of time. Administrators now fill our planning time with knee jerk plans because someone at PED decides the school needs more support. Now you want our class time to be extended? Why? There is no reason.

If you would like to see improvements in student's performance, the single best thing you can do is cap class sizes at 25. I am a special educator working in an inclusion class. There are 32 students in the class. There is little room to walk around and monitor students. We can not engage the students to the level we desire because it is impossible to move desks around. Feedback is very difficult with so many students, and peers at the high school say many classes have more than 40 students in them.

I am already struggling with the poor Social Studies standards that provide no real direction in instruction. Now you want to take away my personal time for no good pedagogical reason? Please rescind this rule; it is indeed unnecessary.

--
blessings
gary

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If you are not the intended recipient of this email, please notify me immediately and delete this Email. The contents are intended only for the recipient.

From: [Sarah Yost](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 6:39:53 PM

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

I am writing to voice my concerns about the proposed calendar change. I am a teacher in Artesia and a parent of a high school student. I have been teaching in NM for 12 years and the length of the school year is not the problem. Time and time again, my students that perform below grade level are chronically absent. I teach first grade so this is a parent issue, not kids skipping class. Where is the accountability for truancy? Our district goes above and beyond to get these students to school and still we have students with 42% of days missed already this year! There are no consequences despite school attendance being a state law. More and more students are chronically absent from school because there is no system in place to hold these parents responsible. If we look at the states that are at the top of education, what are their attendance rates like? Better than 40% absenteeism, I'd bet. Research hasn't shown that added school days improve educational outcomes. If teachers must use researched based strategies, why don't policy makers?

The second biggest concern I see facing our state is the lack of public preschool programs. A devastating amount of children are entering school without early literacy skills or even social skills. How are teachers expected (on top of everything else) to show them the appropriate way to behave? Pre-kindergarten needs to be included in public education and not just for the students on IEPs. All of our students need access to early childhood education. The Youtube videos they are watching at home simply don't prepare them to learn.

Teacher burn out and student fatigue are real things. Adding more days to the calendar will just add to the time that the students are ready to be done with school. May is rough enough as it is. Even motivating my own child to get through the school year is a challenge. She is mentally and emotionally DONE by the end. Teachers will leave the profession and then our students will not have qualified teachers in the classroom. How will this improve scores? Schools that have a 4 day week use this as an incentive when recruiting and those schools perform consistently better academically than the traditional 5 day week. Have we even seen results from the additional days this year?? Why are we not giving this time before changing things again?

Please take the teacher and parent voices in to consideration before making this decision, we are the ones directly affected (also our students).

Thank you,
Sarah Yost

From: [Monica Trujillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 7:51:14 PM

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Dear NM PED,

I am writing in opposition of 6.10.5 NMAC rule. This rule change should go through the legislative process and not be imposed on school districts without any consideration of their specific needs.

Education is crucial for our future and our student deserve the best. New Mexico is a diverse state and there are several school districts who know the specific needs of their students. These districts should continue to have autonomy to make decisions regarding the school calendar that will best serve their students. A one size fits all approach is not the solution to our state's education needs. Adding more days to the school year will not solve the true root of our educational problems.

Teachers spend endless hours outside of school preparing lessons, grading, preparing materials, and communicating with families. We should have the opportunity to complete professional work during school hours and not be required to stay after school to complete work. Teachers have families too and need to be with them.

Educators are working on filling many learning gaps and supporting the social emotional needs of our students. Filling those gaps with more of the same will not suffice. Teachers need high quality professional development in the proven teaching strategies and approaches. Teachers need to know how to analyze data and provide targeted instruction. They need to know how to provide prescriptive and diagnostic interventions based on data. Educators need opportunities to observe high quality instruction and time to reflect on their instruction. They need constructive feedback of their teaching to help them grow professionally. Educators need time to collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and problem solve.

Pre-service teachers need an education that provides a strong foundation and provides the tools needed to provide high quality instruction. They need to be aware of the latest educational research and the social emotional aspect of teaching. Universities need to ensure that pre-service teachers understand how students learn and how to support students who are not responding to their instruction.

Families need resources and opportunities to gain knowledge of how to support their children at home. Teachers cannot do it all! Educating a child takes involves all stake holders and requiring more days is not the answer.

As an educator of 20 years, I have had to seek and pay for my own professional development to provide high quality instruction to my students. That should not be the case. I often had to attend professional development that had nothing to do with my specific situation. Again, a one size fits all approach is not best practice and will not benefit NM students.

Best,
Monica Trujillo
Sent from my iPhone

From: [jmourant](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 8:45:39 PM

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NM PED,

I strongly oppose the rule change to require 180 school days. I am a high school teacher in a mostly rural New Mexico district with 5 day weeks. We have relatively long school days and use less than 180 days to obtain the required number of instructional hours.

As a high school teacher I am well aware of the low levels of student achievement in many districts in New Mexico. Not only do I know the MAPS scores at my high school for last year, but every day I am aware of the poor math and English skills of many students as I teach them physics. Changing how the required instructional hours are distributed amongst days, particularly in districts like mine that have 5 day weeks, will not improve student achievement. Our daily schedule has been designed to meet the needs of our student body. The three days with seven 55 minute classes and the two days with blocked classes work quite well in my opinion. The causes for low student achievement in our student body lie elsewhere. One of them is absenteeism, which is a significant problem at our high school. Students don't learn when they are not in class and teachers spend too much time trying to help students who have been absent catch up. Adding more days to the school year will not reduce absenteeism. Other causes of low student achievement and how to address them are beyond the scope of this e-mail.

My main point is that I feel strongly that increasing the number of school days will not have a positive effect and could have a slight negative effect on student achievement in the New Mexico school district where I teach.

Sincerely,

Judith R. Mourant

From: [Liliana Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 9:27:02 PM

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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.

As a parent of four students living in a rural area, living on a ranch, going to school four days is a plus for us. They all help with household chores and it makes it easy for my husband and I to not have to come down and meet the bus on that extra day. If they went to school five days we would have to leave our jobs earlier to pick them up vs. four school days, the days are longer. There has been no evidence to prove your theory of a five day vs. four day school week. We strongly disagree with the five day school week.

Thank you,
Liliana Gonzales

From: [Terrie Adams](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 9:46:57 PM

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12-10-23

To whom it may concern;

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposal to transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day school week. Our school does not show any difference in academics or sports to those schools who attend 5-days a week. Our students, parents, teachers, and administrators are very happy with the 4-day school week and it is extremely important that our school community is not only successful, but happy.

I have been a full time elementary teacher in the Capitan School District for 19 1/2 years. I live in Ruidoso, New Mexico and it has been a blessing the school was able to extend our school day, so that we could teach four days instead of five because it is extremely costly to drive back and forth to work. There are many teachers who live outside of the district who have benefited from this as well. Fuel costs for buses is an issue for a small district and a 4-day school week schedule has been very beneficial for the district.

Teachers and students also benefit by being able to schedule appointments on Friday instead of missing school. Finding substitutes in a small district is difficult and very costly. Our 4-day school week has really helped our students, teachers, and school to have this extra day for such necessary appointments. Additional concerns are increased transportation costs, increased heating/cooling costs, cafeteria costs, and attendance issues. Families may also face difficulties in coordinating after-school activities and childcare arrangements on the newly introduced day.

Furthermore, a 4- day school week is a draw for students as well as teachers to attend our school. I feel that we will lose students and staff if asked to move back to a

5-day school week. We are a small community and having the freedom to choose how we schedule our school week is an American right. Our students are learning and our families are happy. I would hate for that to change by forcing districts that are working just to comply with a one size fits all mentality.

Before deciding on such a significant change, I would urge the Public Education Department to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the potential benefits and drawbacks associated with increased classroom time. It is essential to involve input from various stakeholders, including students, parents, and teachers, to ensure that the decision is well-informed and takes into account the diverse needs of the school community.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and hope that careful consideration will be given to the potential implications of transitioning to a 5-day school week.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Terrie Adams

--

Terrie Adams
First Grade Teacher
Capitan Elementary

From: [Thalia Papadakis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:44:05 AM

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

Hello,

Like most educators, I will be teaching on 12/18/23. I am upset that the meeting to discuss this proposed change has been scheduled for a day and time when my colleagues and I are unavailable. Hold if

Requiring all PD to be held outside the duty day will be complicated for districts like my own, which are already meeting and exceeding instructional hours. We do this in We would either need to add days to our calendar, or would require us to come in or stay for PD. Before/after the duty day is when we plan our kissing Ms, order Bi potential for all of our professional work time to be required to occur outside of the duty day.

Sent from my iPhone union

From: [Thalia Papadakis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:03:32 AM

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

Hello,

Like most educators, I will be teaching on 12/18/23. I am upset that the meeting to discuss this proposed change has been scheduled for a day and time when my colleagues and I are unavailable. This proposed change is something educators should have a voice in, meaning it should not be held during the instructional day.

Requiring all PD to be held outside the duty day will be complicated for districts like my own, which is already meeting and exceeding instructional hours. With this proposal, we would either need to add days to our calendar, or come in early or stay late for PD. Before/after the duty day is when we plan and prepare our lessons, grade, correspond with parents, and consult with other colleagues. This proposal would add even more unpaid work to our plates.

I ask that you be respectful and cognizant of our time when drafting proposals and scheduling meetings related to our specific roles.

Thank You,

Thalia Papadakis

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From: [Pamela Ostler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 7:52:36 AM

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 regarding the recent proposal by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) to expand school calendars, increasing the number of instructional days required for students statewide. This proposed change, which comes months after the Legislature passed House Bill 130, has raised significant apprehensions among families and educators alike.

While I understand the importance of striving for excellence in education, I am concerned about the overreach of power implied by this new rule. House Bill 130, which increased education funding to accommodate additional instruction hours, was a notable step towards enhancing the quality of education in our state. However, the proposal to change the measuring stick from hours to days, increasing the mandate from 176 to 180, and requiring all 1,140 hours to be spent in the classroom with students, raises questions about the rationale behind such a drastic shift.

Furthermore, it is disconcerting that we have not had sufficient time to assess the impact of the extended school year initiated by House Bill 130 on student learning outcomes. It seems premature to implement additional changes without first evaluating the effectiveness of the measures already in place. The well-being of our students should be at the forefront of any decision-making process, and we must ensure that any adjustments to the educational system are well-informed and beneficial.

I would like to bring to your attention the widespread sentiment among families and educators who are opposed to the idea of adding more school days. The current proposal by the PED not only disregards the need for a comprehensive evaluation but also eliminates crucial professional development (PD) days for teachers. PD days play a vital role in fostering collaboration among educators, addressing school-based challenges, and ultimately improving the overall quality of education. Stripping away these essential opportunities for growth and collaboration may inadvertently hinder the progress we aim to achieve.

In light of these concerns, I kindly request that the PED reconsider the proposed expansion of school calendars and engage in a more thorough and collaborative dialogue with stakeholders, including families and educators. It is essential that decisions affecting our education system are made with careful consideration, taking into account the perspectives and experiences of those directly involved in the teaching and learning process.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing more about the deliberations and outcomes surrounding this proposal.

Sincerely,

Pamela Ostler

From: [J.J. Crowley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS - Comment
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:24:15 AM

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I am a New Mexico resident and have many friends who are teachers in the public school system. All of them have expressed their concern that this new rule will drive quality teachers away from teaching in New Mexico and make the current teacher shortage even worse.

Secondly, some of the highest performing schools in the state already have very good systems in place, with their students achieving excellent results. This new rule basically upends the good work that they are already doing and again puts a further unnecessary burden on teachers.

I am urging that this rule be reconsidered less it undermines the precious resources of actual teachers that we have in this state.

Best regards,
Jim Crowley - Albuquerque
505-489-9629

From: [Elizabeth Wendler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:52:09 AM

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

To Whom It May Concern,

It has come to my attention that you are attempting to circumvent the law and force educators to essentially work unpaid, by increasing instructional time while also eliminating essential time for teachers to complete professional duties, this is egregious. Increasing instructional hours while simultaneously removing time in the day for educators to complete state mandated professional development, collaboration, mentoring and parent teacher conferences is deplorable and will lead to ineffective, burnt out teachers and decreased student outcomes.

Teachers need time to stay professionally up to date, communicate with families and collaborate with coworkers. Already teachers have lost precious time to plan effectively with the introduction of the bell to bell schedule and now you wish to take away even more. Educators already work well above their slated pay and this will lower that pay even more. If you wish to increase the instructional hours/ days you must include professional duties in that time and pay us accordingly. Please increase the school day to 8.5 hours (following TOPS model) to give educators time to complete professional development, parent communication, lesson planning and collaboration hours (removing bell to bell schedule), while also increasing instructional minutes for students, and compensate us accordingly for this increased work time.

--

Best,

Liz Wendler
Visual Arts Teacher
Hawthorne Elementary

From: [Danielle Parker](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Instructional Days
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:06:11 AM

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Good morning,

I am a parent of two students attending school in Albuquerque. I wish to let you know that I am NOT in favor of increasing instructional days to the school calendar.

The scores are low. I understand this; however, the students do not need additional days to combat this. The students need socio-emotional education. The teachers need additional support and increased well-being. Adding instructional days will decrease morale and well-being.

In summary, I am NOT IN FAVOR of increasing instructional days.

Danielle Parker

From: [Kelley Alsup](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:15:12 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 rule change that pertains to House Bill 130. Some of our highest performing districts in the State of New Mexico are schools that have 4-day weeks, one of which is a member school district of ours: Loving Municipal Schools. Not only does this proposed rule change attempt to take away local control, but it is also not based on reliable data. New Mexico's school districts and students are diverse and have individual needs. This rule change does not recognize nor allow for our New Mexico school districts to determine and/or meet those diverse and individual needs. Please consider rejecting this rule change.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley Alsup

Executive Director, PVREC 8
2218 W. Grand Avenue, Artesia, NM 88210
PO Box 155, Artesia, NM, 88211
(575) 748-6100 (Office)
(575) 626-8724 (Cell)
kalsup@pvrec8.com

From: [Diane Marino](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] feedback
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:38:52 AM

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I am an elementary educator, and I would like to give feedback about the proposed rule changes regarding the length of the school year. Extending the school year won't do a bit of good unless we first get small class sizes, more interventionists, more school counselors, more re-directors, more educational assistants, and decent facilities with proper HVAC and ventilation. Kids do not learn when they are hot, freezing, and/or sick. Extreme student behaviors are hijacking entire classes to the point that no one is able to learn. We haven't had a school counselor for months, and we don't have enough EA's to give one-on-one support to these students or to support a teacher who has to repeatedly clear the room due to a student's violent meltdown. One of our special ed classes -- the place to get individualized attention -- has 18 students in it. The process the classroom teacher has to go through to get support for a student with extreme behaviors is slow and cumbersome, and many times the parents thwart those efforts at every turn.

If you want to know what we need in order to bring students up to grade-level standards, ask the teachers. Otherwise, you're just applying political solutions to technical problems.

Sincerely,
Diane Marino

--

Diane Marino (she/her)
APS Elementary Music Teacher
Alvarado Elementary School
diane.marino@aps.edu

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From: [Mike McMillan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:55:02 AM

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

Dear NM Public Education Department,

As a member of the Silver Consolidated Schools Board of Education, I write to express my strong opposition to the proposed rule changes by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED).

The crux of my concern lies in the potential ramifications these proposed changes may have on local control of school districts, directly circumventing the legislative intent of HB 130. It is essential to preserve the autonomy of school districts to effectively cater to the unique needs of their communities.

Furthermore, I wish to draw attention to the adverse effects these proposed rules would have on schools operating on a 4-day schedule, exemplified by the longstanding success of the Cliff Schools in our district. Over decades, the Cliff Schools have consistently achieved high academic rankings while adhering to this schedule. Any imposition on this model could jeopardize the positive outcomes we have observed.

I want to emphasize that our district has proactively implemented the necessary changes to align with the requirements outlined in HB 130. We have undertaken this task collaboratively, involving our school community and the larger communities we serve. This collective effort reflects our commitment to meeting legislative guidelines while ensuring the integrity of our local educational framework.

In light of these considerations, I urge you to reconsider the implementation of the proposed rules. I propose a collaborative approach where the PED works closely with our school districts to formulate a framework of rules that not only adhere to legislative mandates but also foster the advancement of our state's educational system.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to a constructive dialogue that prioritizes the best interests of our students and communities.

Sincerely,
Mike McMillan
Board Member
Silver Consolidated Schools Board of Education
PO Box 46
Tyrone, NM 88065

From: [Zeb Apachito](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day vs 5 day
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:59:41 AM

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

Hello, My name is Zeb Apachito. I am a freshman at Magdalena municipal schools. I think that we should stay on a 4 day school schedule for many reasons. Right now many kids and adults are happy with the way the 4 day week works into their weekends. As soon as you add an extra day into the week it can make for less time that families spend together or even for kids to have a nice relaxing weekend. One thing to also consider is the fact that many families have ranches or farms that take everybody in the family's help. This can really hurt families in the ways they do not have help to get things done on the weekends. As it is some students already are tired in a 4 day week, whether they get enough sleep or not, adding an extra day will only cause them to become more tired. I feel that adding the one day will not have a huge effect on test scores. As we are the last state in the country for education I believe that we have to start at the root and really focus on ensuring that our students get what they need and are able to grasp the important topics/ concepts.

Sincerely, Zeb

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From: [Braymon Padilla](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-day vs 5-day
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:03:52 AM

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

It should stay for 4-day because we need more time to rest and I'm sure that the teacher needs it too.

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From: [Kylie Pruett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week-6.10.5 Proposed NMAC Rule Change.
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:07:02 AM

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

Good morning,

As a former student and current teacher at Capitan Schools, I feel it is important that my voice is heard regarding the changes that should not occur in our school.

First, I believe it is important that you all know that I attended Capitan schools k-12, we changed to a four-day school week after Christmas of my kindergarten year. As a student, this made it easier for my siblings and me to attend doctor appointments and gave us more time together as a family. I have never known anything different than a four-day week.

As a teacher, I see deeper benefits to a four-day week. I am able to spend more time on larger subjects because I get to see my students for 57 minutes each day. This is important to me in order to expand on complex topics. My understanding is that the five-day week will lessen our time with the students daily. Having a four-day week also cuts overhead costs, in Capitan, we barely have enough staff right now, if changed to a five-day week, I am confident, we will not have the manpower to cover our school system.

The proposed changes to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 SHOULD NOT pass, the students and teachers of Capitan schools all agree.

There is no reason to try to fix something that is not broken. A four-day week works well for Capitan Schools! If something needed to change, it should have changed 18 years ago, not now!!!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please contact me at any time.

Kylie D. Pruett
HS ELA Teacher
Capitan High School
(575) 354-4500
kylie.pruett@capitantigers.org

"Things turn out best for those who make the best of the way things turn out." -John Wooden

From: [Rosana Sanchez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] More Student Days
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:22:48 AM

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NM keeps doing what doesn't work when it comes to education. We don't need more hours with students.. We need smaller class sizes, less paperwork, and parent involvement!!!!

Stop doing MORE OF WHAT IS PROVEN TO NOT WORK. By doing this you are burning out teachers, families , and students. More teachers will retire if they can and less teachers will enter the field.

But NM and education is like beating a dead horse. I've been in education 20+ years and every year the teacher is required to do more and more. No responsibility is placed on the student or family. I have classes with 30 students at my school.... it is all behavior management and not teaching! Please cap ALL classes at 20.. That would make the biggest difference instead of adding more student days....

[Rosana M. Sanchez](#)
[Bilingual Reading Interventionist](#)
[La Mesa Elementary](#)
[575-430-6163](#)
rosana.sanchez@aps.edu

From: [Becky Huey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 Proposed NMAC Rule Change HB130
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:24:24 AM

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To Whom It May Concern;

My name is Becky Huey. I am a 1986 graduate of Capitan High School and have two sons who have graduated from here as well. I moved back to Capitan in 1992 to teach in our school and raise my family in our wonderful community. As a teacher here for 10 years, I was able to see the effects of both a 4 and 5 day school week. As a Middle School Science teacher I preferred the 4 Day week, because it allowed me to have my students for a longer period of time each day. The 4 Day school week allowed for more family time, extracurricular activities, and a day to schedule appointments. My kids are grown now and I am the Middle/High School principal. I still see the 4 Day school week very beneficial to our community. But at the political level, I believe we should have local control. This overreach will undermine our ability to make local decisions that best serve our community.

Please reconsider the changes that have been proposed in HB130 6.10.5 NMAC.

Respectfully,

Becky Huey

--

Becky Huey
Capitan Municipal Schools
Middle/High School Principal

575-354-8516 Office
575-354-8505 Fax
575-500-9363 Cell

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From: [Mariquita Rael](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against 5-day school week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:43:25 AM

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My name is Mariquita Rael, a parent, as well as a Special Education Teacher in our district of Questa. By now, you've heard dozens of reasons regarding how a 4 day week is beneficial to our district. Over 90% of our community and school staff voted for the 4 day week, and I'm asking that you advocate for our community's educational needs.

If we switch to a 5 day week, there will be more overall absences for both teachers and students. I for one know I will miss more school to take my children to appointments, which leads to their learning loss as well. We live in a small rural community where we have to travel several hours to see a doctor, specialized doctor, dentist, orthodontist, ENT specialist, etc. Our district will lose highly qualified teachers, as well as students who will transfer to 4-day/online schools. I know of several teachers who will not come back if this switch is made the switch- this has long term consequences for our all of students from PreK to 12th grade. Schools across the country are switching to a 4 day week, and seeing the benefits of it. I would like to reiterate that we will still meet the instructional hours set by the state, and student learning will still and does happen.

During the week, teachers have very little time to plan our lessons, prep for class, create resources, grade papers, or work on lesson plans. Our preps, IF we get them, are spent collaborating with colleagues, communicating with parents, making copies, doing required paperwork, etc. Teaching is a very demanding and stressful profession, and teacher burnout is a real thing. We work long hours, deal with challenging students and parents, and manage heavy workloads. A 4-day week ensures that teachers are rested, content, are able to fulfill our duties, and will stay in our district.

Please let us have this extra time to work and prepare lessons from home, and enjoy our weekends with our families. Many of us teachers spend hours working from home on a weekly basis, because at school there are too many distractions to get what needs to be completed done, especially with deadlines. I humbly ask that you listen to our community votes, calendar committee, superintendent, and to us teachers and staff. Please keep our schools an appealing place to be for students, families, and staff members, thank you.

Unfortunately, I live over 2 hours away and cannot take a whole day off to attend this meeting. Can it please be set up where we can attend via zoom or another virtual platform so we can attend and speak our reasons?

Mariquita Rael

From: [Pike Ketcham](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] changes to the school calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:57:11 AM

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to whom it may concern i do not agree with changing the calendar because that is less time i get to help my family on the ranch because i am speeding an extra day at school. and this would take time away from learning how to do other things like learn how to weld or build or learn how to run a ranch because then i would only get two days to learn how to do things like that and learn real life skills.

sincerely, concerned student

From: [Jeremiah Gensler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed changes to school calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:57:30 AM

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Dear NM Government, We do not want to have a 5 day school week because: Most of our family members are off on friday, We learn more from a 4 day school week, Most of us have to go to roswell over the weekends, We are more culturally appropriated than any of the other state, We also have to work to keep our family's money up and to keep us out of debt.

from, Jeremiah Gensler

From: [Nicholas Depascal](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Albuquerque Teachers Federation](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:59:29 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing today as a high school teacher (and parent) in Albuquerque Public Schools to register my distress and dislike of the proposed rule change oving required days to 180, and removing teacher collaboration time, parent/teacher conferences, etc. from work time. Simply adding more days and changing the calendar once again, less than a year after we have already added hours to the school year and expanded our time in school is poor planning and, in trying to circumvent the law passed last year, unethical.

Parents, students, teachers, and school admin are still trying to get adjusted to the new year and requirements and figure out what works best for our students. As a high school teacher, I can tell you that simply adding more days and hours is NOT the solution to absences and student engagement. Instead of simply adding time to our school year, we need to invest in smaller class sizes, better professional development, and developing cohesion in our curriculums to best serve and engage our students. Why not a state sponsored capstone program that gives seniors an opportunity to work on a passion project that may help them discover themselves and what they are interested in pursuing beyond high school? What about stronger school cohesion and social emotional learning? What about our infrastructure? I teach in a building from the 1950s with no windows that is currently falling apart and filled with gnats. Do you think that students want to come for four more days of school in facilities like this? What about working on poverty and accessibility as a society? What about creating schools that welcome parents as partners to engage them as well in their children's learning and creating curriculum that reflects the beautiful diversity of our state? Simply asking us to teach MORE because...test scores, is a losing strategy that will keep us from fulfilling our potential as a state. Seek more input from the community and help to make our schools more safe and welcoming for all.

You will win no allies with this sort of bulldozing strategy of a rule change. You will negatively affect our rural schools who need a four day week (and let us have a real conversation about a four day week for ALL NM high schools! I think THIS would improve attendance and retention/recruitment of educators) and by taking away local control force schools into a cookie cutter approach that HAS NEVER worked.

Thank you for your time, and I hope you will quash this rule change as is and pursue change through more ethical and vetted methods.

Best,

--

Nick DePascal
IB/English Teacher
Sandia High School

Albuquerque Public Schools

"Freedom is nothing but a chance to be better."
- Albert Camus

"The reward for good work is more work."
-Courtland Cox

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From: [Kourtney Brandenberger](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:05:22 AM

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To whom this may concern, I disagree with the five day school. There is a problem with NM education, but it is more seen in the larger schools. The smaller schools are not who you have to worry about. We keep good grades year around and research has shown that the smaller schools are not the ones that are struggling. If you would like to go five school days per week it could mess with our schedule for working and we all live very far away. If we started five day weeks some of us would homeschool and get a lower GPA. It's also been shown that four day school is better for students. Some of us get home at 8 pm anyways and we barely have time to spend time with our families.

From: [Adison Vigil](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:05:51 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a seventh-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am totally against the calendar change to 180 school days (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). Our school goes to school 4 days a week, we live in a small community where everybody knows everyone. Having the three-day weekend allows our family to work Fridays for my dad's independent business which provides for my family. Working in this business can teach me about real-world experiences, and what challenging work is like. If my dad were to be shorthanded and needed me to work Fridays with him, I would have to miss school which will count against my attendance and would have me skipping classes and not learning what is being taught.

Not only do we work on Friday's, but we travel far distances as well. With 5 scheduled school days a week my family would not be able to get where we needed to go. While traveling my family and I learn about the land around us, that we have never seen before. Not only does my family travel to learn, but also, we travel to get livestock. My family raises beef in three separate locations, which provides food for our family. The beef we raise is great protein to me which can help me with sports and my physical activity. And because our community is so small anything is 30 minutes from us. Meaning on Fridays we go to appointments because on Fridays we have no school so I would not miss any school and have it count out on my attendance.

I believe that our school should not go for 180 school days.

A Concerned Student,
Adison Vigil

From: [Lily Bradshaw](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:05:53 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and legislative affairs division

New Mexico public education department

300 don grasper ave., room 121

Santa fe, new Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I'm a seventh-grade student at Elida municipal schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am against the proposed school calendar to become 180 days (6.10.5.7.c. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). Our school goes 4 days a week and we live in a small-town ranching community. We got a 3-day weekend which means we get to spend time with family and help our family with everyday things; hunting, going to the store, church, working, baking, budgeting, cleaning, yard work, feeding and much more. I think we all do better with the 4 days a week.

A concern student,

Lily Bradshaw

From: [Bryce Brandenburg](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:05:56 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and legislative affairs division
New Mexico public education department
300 Don Gasper Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe New Mexico 87501

New Mexico public education department:

I am a seventh-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am completely against having to go to school for the proposed school calendar change to 180 days. (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIRMENTS). Our school goes for 4 days a week and learns a lot of stuff over the 4 days. I believe that over the weekend everybody learns and does something that they have learned in school. Outside of school I have learned from my parents how to ride a horse and ride bulls. I have learned how to saddle up, I have learned how to bake and cook from my mom. I learned about stuff from my grandpa that happened back in the day when he was young. Like stuff about Billy the Kid, people, and stuff like that. I have learned from my grandma how to bake as well and clean. What I do in the 3 days we get off helps me learn real work things to help me in my adulthood that I cannot get from school. My whole family and I like to hunt and rodeo and hunting. If we must go 180 days I will lose time with my family and I will not learn these real-world things.

I think that we have more time to get our homework done on the three days that we have off to

better prepare for the new week. The Friday we have off allows us to go to appointments without missing school. Also, some students have jobs they work at on Friday to help earn money and be responsible. Due to our community needs I believe students will miss a lot of Fridays if we are made to go 180 days so our attendance will go down.

I do not believe a 180-day calendar is the best thing for our community.

A Concerned Student Bryce Salazar.

From: [Aubrey Miles](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:05:57 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a seventh-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am completely bothered by the proposed school calendar change to 180 days (6.105.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS) Our school week is four days, and we live in a small ranching community which is very family oriented. With the three-day weekend I can learn many life skills while ranching with my family and keeping our ranching time alive. I have learned many things from ranching about how to keep your cattle alive and how to profit money with how much to spend on hay, land, and riding equipment for riding horses. I spend quality time baking with my mom for her business. Doing that will help me learn how to cook when I get older and start baking and cooking new food and treats. Most of our students, including myself, go to church on Sundays even if there is no church on Friday people who teach Sunday school still set up on Fridays for Sunday and they must set up church chairs. Our school's test results show how much we learn in just a four-day week. Attendance will also be a problem with dentist and doctor appointments. The dentist is closed

on Saturdays and Sundays so it will be hard to make an appointment on a non-school day.

Our small school is learning so much from just our day week and it is helping our small ranching community.

A Concerned Student,

Aubrey Miles

From: [Kaylee Nixon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:06:13 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a seventh-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am against our school calendar changing to 180 days. (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS) Our school has a small community, and we only go for four days. The reason I am against the school calendar changes is because of what I do on the weekends to benefit me eventually in the future as an adult. I hunt and so on Fridays we travel to where we are going to hunt. Hunting is a learning process that will teach me for the future because if you hunt you will get meat and will not run out of food. Then you will have meat year-round. On Fridays I work with my dad on side jobs; putting new flooring in, roofing, laying concrete, and more. I also babysit on Fridays so if we have school on Fridays, I cannot help those families with babysitting. Which will impact me in my adulthood. Also, while working with my dad and babysitting after I get paid it helps me to know how to budget my money so I can become more financially stable. My mom works for Scentsy, so on Fridays I help her organize and deliver all of her orders. That will help me because when I grow up that will teach me how to treat my customers and things like that.

I have early basketball practice conditioning on Fridays so if I have school, we will not be able to do that. Basketball practice will help me with college. On Fridays in my house that is like cleaning day which will teach me how to be more organized in my room and for when I am an adult. On Fridays I have church and I serve at my church so I would have to be there earlier. I have physical therapy and doctor appointments on Fridays. Those appointments will help me be healthier. On Fridays I have my dentist appointments because they are not open on Saturdays so I will have clean teeth and will not have cavities or rotten teeth. All these examples are what I do on Fridays that school will interrupt.

I am against changing the school calendar; it will not help with students' attendance and without good attendance you will not have good grades.

A concerned student,

Kaylee Nixon

From: [Kelsey Summers](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:06:21 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division

New Mexico Public Education Department

300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a seventh-grade student from Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. It has come to my attention that changing the calendar to a 180-day school year (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS) is being considered. I completely disagree with this proposal for multiple reasons. One reason is that I live in a rural area where people do not live close to schools, so they already spend a significant amount of time and money driving to school. If Fridays were added to the schedule, it would add up the daily costs of driving to school. On my weekends I spend time learning real world skills. Weekends are often spent not only getting caught up on my weekly chores, but also preparing for the next week. My family also raises and breeds animals to sell them, this can take a lot of time and effort to complete these necessary tasks. On many Fridays I also spend time working for people around town. This work that I do prepares me for a life of working in the future as it is developing those life skills that I need. On a five-day week I would not have time to develop these skills. There are often tournaments on the weekends, so rather than just doing those all-day tournaments when I am off school, I would have to miss school, which would count against my attendance. Many of my doctor's appointments are on Fridays so I am getting those priorities taken care of without missing any educational time at school. Just having Fridays off has opened my doors to many opportunities to do incredible things and meet remarkable people.

I strongly disagree that our school should go to 180-days and that our school district should lose their voice and their ability to adjust the schedule for our community.

A Concerned Student,

From: [Axel Rodriguez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] letter to state
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:06:34 AM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and legislative affairair

division New Mexico public

Education Department

300 Don Gaspar Ave..

Room 121 Santa Fe New Mexico 87501

I am 7th grade student at Elida Municipal schools in Elida, New Mexico. I think that a 180 day school year (6.10.5.7.C.NMAC SCHOOL CALENDER REQUIREMENTS) is a bad idea because I have to help my dad on the weekends doing things such as branding and working cows. This allows me to learn about the family ranch traditions and pass them down to my kids. I learn about helping people and being a good neighbor. I also learn to be responsible by waking up early and constituting as part of my family to help run tr ranch and learn real world things. I get to see more of my family because most of my family is busy working so working alongside them allows me to spedn time with them and learn from them. I also get to go to church on my three-day week because having the extra day allows us to get work done so we can attend church on Sunday. If we lose our Friday to work, we may not be able to get all the work done to free up Sunday. Therefore a 4 day school week helps keep better school/family balance. School staff also benefits greatly from having more time to do lessons and spend time with their families, so they are ready to teach on Monday. A 4-day school week contributes to having one extra day during the week for personal errands, appointments, and paperwork.

A 180 day school year is not the answer for our community.

A Concerned Student,

Axel Rodriguez

From: [Brindle Racher](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Changes to the School Calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:08:08 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I believe this proposal presents multiple negative aspects towards the youth of New Mexico. Coming from a rural school, I do several things outside of the classroom. Oftentimes, I work on fridays, or I'm involved in extracurricular activities. By making changes to the school calendar, this is not only putting more stress on students mentally, but it has the potential to take away from the experiences that help prepare us for a successful future. Despite New Mexico's struggles in education overall, statistics show that schools that have four day school weeks have higher test scores than schools with a five day week. However, there is no solidified evidence that more school improves education.

Sincerely, a concerned student,

Brindle Racher

From: [Joseph Sanchez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] changes to the school calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:08:13 AM

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To whom it may concern, *I* think the changes to the school calendar to a five day change to the week, may cause the students to feel more impoverished. Its adding a day to the week that we would have used to rest up and regain our minds and energy to put into our tests and final exams. With the changes it would take away a day we could help work to put into our community. sincerely a concerned student-joseph sanchez

From: [Rhianna Sanchez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changes in the School Calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:11:36 AM

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To whom it may concern, these changes in our school calendar would create unsatisfactory aspects. My peers and I say this because there would be many changes. My personal reason behind this is that 86.1% of all four day weeks are meeting performance expectations, as compared to 72.9% of five day counterparts throughout the rest of the state. This means that schools that go only four days a week have less time to get work done, meaning students get more done in one day. 36 states are pushing for four day school weeks, yet we are wanting five day school weeks. Research shows that schools that have four day weeks have a higher academic performance. My question is: Why change something that doesn't need changed?

An apprehensive student
-Rhianna Sanchez

From: [Todd Knouse](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on proposed "repeal and replace" of NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:53:49 AM

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Dear members of the Policy and Legislative Affairs Division of the Public Education Department:

My name is Todd Knouse and I am the Head of School of New Mexico International School, a charter school in Albuquerque. I am writing with feedback for the proposed "repeal and replace" of NMAC 6.10.5. I have three concerns I'd like to express and one proposed solution.

Concern #1: The PED does not have authority to mandate 180 instructional days for schools.

In 2011 the legislature amended NMSA 22-2-8.1 and removed the counting of instructional *days* and replaced it with the counting of instructional *hours*. This has not changed, even with the legislature's recent amendment of the law in 2023. The legislature continues to allow charter schools and districts to create a calendar of any number of days (more or even less than 180 days), so long as the instructional hour requirement has been met. For example a school could have 152 instructional days of 7.5 hours each and comply with the law. The PED does not have authority to override the actions of the legislature.

Concern #2: Defining the length of an instructional day is not necessary. It is also contrary to many best practices currently in use around the State.

Having any requirements on a school day that are based on *length of the school day* appears to be an attempt by the Secretary to regulate the number of school days a district or charter has in its instructional calendar. An NMAC requirement that an instructional day must be between a certain number of hours to "count" as a day appears to be, in effect, an attempt to count instructional *days*, not instructional *hours*. Doing so is clearly against the intent of the legislature. If there is no legal requirement for a set number of instructional days, *what does it matter how long each instructional day is*, so long as the annual hourly requirement is met?

In addition, many schools (such as New Mexico International School), that are "schools of excellence" by the PED's own measure, have alternative calendars that use shortened days or weeks. For example, NMIS has 'early release Wednesdays' where students are released early and teachers spend the balance of the work day in collaborative work about students, student progress, and the adaptation of our program based on student need. Rather than de-incentivizing schools for 'early release days' by making such days "not

count for full day", it seems to be more beneficial to look at the schools who have calendars with shortened days and/or weeks yet maintain high student performance in hopes of replicating their successes.

Concern #3: The PED does not have authority to create additional times of the school day to be excluded from the instructional hour count.

The proposed language in section 8.E seeks to exclude certain times of the day from the instructional hour calculation. In 2023 when the legislature passed HB130 (amending NMSA 22-2-8.1), it kept the language that excluded "lunch" from counting instructional hours to meet the newly increased instructional hour minimums. Notably, the legislature did not add additional times to be excluded from this total, such as "lunch recess" or "passing periods." Furthermore, the legislature did not grant the PED authority to add additional times of the school day to be excluded from the instructional hour total.

In addition, in our duly passed legislation, there is no mention of how long a lunch period has to be. It just states that it has to be excluded from the instructional hour total. If the legislature wanted to define how long a lunch should be, presumably it would have done so when it amended the law in 2023.

Lastly, the proposals to add these additional exclusions to instructional hour calculations are entirely nonsensical. Why would a morning recess be considered "instructional" but a recess that happens immediately after lunch "non-instructional?" Similarly, what's special about a passing period to or from lunch that makes it different from a passing period between two classrooms? This makes no sense.

Proposed Solution:

The current statute NMSA 22-2-8.1 is sufficiently prescriptive and needs no additional rule promulgation. The current proposal by PED is "repeal and replace;" however, I propose that the only action needed is "repeal" the entire text of NMAC 6.10.5 and have schools rely on the text of the law for requirements for instructional calendars.

--

Todd Knouse

Head of School and Chief Visionary

New Mexico International School

An International Baccalaureate World School

7215 Montgomery Blvd. NE

Albuquerque, NM 87109 USA

(505)503-7670

www.nmis.org

From: [Diana Barragan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:04:08 PM

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Our small community benefits greatly from a four day week, which gives our students one day a week to take care of appointments and it also gives our staff that extra day for appointments. By giving us one day a week to take care of appointments this decreases the absences for students and staff. This also benefits a small district in saving on daily utility expenses.

Students and staff come back to school/work more rested and ready to work on Monday. The three day weeked gives us time to rest and take care of appointments/mental health days.

Please consider the above mentioned reasons for a continuing with a four day week.

From: [Sophia Minetos](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extended school year
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:16:26 PM

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Hello,

I do not believe that extending the school year is necessary or beneficial for our students.

From: [EJ Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback NMPED 6.10.5.8 (C) 1,2,3
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:19:24 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing with concerns regarding the proposed changes to NMPED Title 6 Chapter 10 Part 5 Section 8, C 1, 2, & 3.

Section C

Rule 1. This rule states all public school calendars shall include at least 180 instructional days per school year, exclusive of teachers' professional work hours.

Rule 2. All public schools shall schedule more than fifty percent of school weeks as five day school weeks, and

Rule 3. All public schools shall be deemed to operate on five day school weeks for the purposes of k-12 plus program funding calculations in Section 9 of this rule.

*Our two children attend Des Moines Municipal School. This school is currently ranked in the top 10% for reading, math, and science within the state of NM, meeting all guidelines and proficiencies while operating on our current calendar and going with a hybrid learning system of attendance required on some Fridays. If our school currently meets guidelines, and exceeds set proficiencies by nearly double, adding more days to our calendar seems ludicrous. There are many more factors that affect student academic success than just days attended such as high-quality teachers, positive school culture, high expectations of all students, strong family support, and consistent school leadership. The proposed change is not supported by research, which consistently shows that increased instructional time alone does not guarantee improved student outcomes. Rather, **factors such as regular, consistent attendance, student engagement, smaller class sizes, rigorous learning opportunities, highly qualified teachers, high-quality learning materials, and robust family and community support are proven contributors to academic success.** Your proposed changes are a blanketed response to what needs to be address locally in those schools that are not meeting the standards. Work with the schools that are struggling!*

Our two children are meeting and exceeding all proficiencies and guidelines set for them while participating in several extracurricular activities. These proposed changes create an extra burden and strain to juggle school and extracurricular activities. Research shows teens who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to engage in school and to graduate from high school. They may also have better attendance and standardized test scores. Research also shows extracurricular activities expand possibilities for identity development, bolster personal growth, cultivate character development, and build valuable relationships. Yet another example that extra days in the classroom is not the only thing that supports total student success.

As you may know, New Mexico is the 5th largest state in the U.S. which means families in many of the rural communities travel much farther to school than those in urban communities. Many of the students in our area travel from ranches and other small neighboring towns surrounding Des Moines and Union County, creating an extra burden on the bus system and parents who must travel to bring their children to school. Considerations should be made when adding hours increases the school districts costs. Adding this much extra time to our calendar adds 4,200 extra miles to our travel time a year!

What is also very concerning is that the NMPED is attempting to enforce this rule by inserting language into the rule that does not currently exist in the New Mexico Statute, and by doing so, will be exerting authority they do not have. Its a move that raises questions about the departments power and the potential infringement on our local autonomy!

Thank you for thoughtfully considering our concerns and feedback.

Camille Johnson
(701) 793-3709

From: [Maria Beltran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed rule.
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:53:58 PM

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Hi, My name is Maria Beltran, I'm an Educational Assistant for Sped, at El Dorado Community School. I've been working for the School District for 12 years. I oppose the rule because it's really frustrating when we're asked to work more, and get less money. This school year I got a "raise", but Health Insurance, and retirement fee went so high, that I ended up with less money in my pocket (than what I got last school year).

I love working with kids at school, but I also need to make a living.

Sincerely,
Maria Beltran
(505)490-7945

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From: rdmatt@juno.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: hisaekiyosawa@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on Rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 12:57:51 PM

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

Hello,

I wish to share some comments with those who are making the decisions about how to improve educational outcomes in New Mexico's schools. I am a credentialed Bilingual/Cross-cultural Specialists with experience teaching K through 12th grades in various settings including California and New Mexico's public schools and private schools in Japan. Also I am a parent of a 2nd grader currently in public school. The purpose of Rule 6.10.5 NMAC is surely to improve our state's results in educating our youth. But my experience in over 40 years of teaching is that it is dangerous to look to a simple solution to a complex problem. Mandating adding more hours to the school year is one such simple solution which will not work for all schools or districts. More hours of teaching does not equal more hours of learning. Only simple minds would use such a rule to solve problems that range from chronic poverty in many communities to severe under-funding for education in general. Rather than looking at hard long-term solutions some reach for the quick fix that will not work. Rather than throw an extra burden on over-worked teachers and staff why not consider some of the following:

- **Raise teacher compensation and prep time to enhance the effectiveness of the present student contact hours.**
- **Hire more teachers and teacher assistants to bring down the student/teacher ratio.**
- **Make sure that every school has at least one nurse and one counselor full time to attend to student challenges that fall outside the classroom responsibilities.**
- **Fix the transportation system so students can rely on safe, reliable, and short commute to schools.**
- **Focus teacher time on EDUCATION instead of STANDARDIZED TESTING which is just regurgitation of the expectations of billionaire testing corporations.**
- **Fund the Arts to educate students beyond the limitations of Math, English, Technology, and Science--this comes from a former English, Math, and Science teacher.**
- **Increase the effectiveness of student contact hours by having more teacher training, mentoring, master teacher training, as well as a well funded classroom.**
- **Be sure to honor all the diverse linguistic communities which our schools serve. Spanish, native languages, and other speakers should be encouraged to develop and find support in school.**

Please don't fall into the quick solution trap. Do New Mexico's children a favor and **DO NOT PASS RULE 6.10.5 NMAC.**

Sincerely,
Robert Mattson San Ysidro, NM

From: [Jake Devine](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day Rule Change Proposal
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 1:11:29 PM

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Good afternoon,

I am writing in hopes of discouraging the 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements rule change proposal being brought forth. I have a few concerns not only as an educator, but as a Native New Mexican.

My first issue is that this rule threatens the local authority of a school board. They are elected by the community they are involved with, wouldn't they know more about the local needs? I teach at the small 2A school of Capitan High School, where we have students that travel over 60 miles one way to come to school. In Lincoln county we have 3 other smaller 1A 4 day week schools surrounding us, (Hondo, Carrizozo, Corona) where students travel 90+miles to attend.

The second issue I have with this is that we use our 4 day week as an incentive to get better educators for our school. With a large school like Ruidoso just down the road, which we continuously outperform academically, because we have a higher rigor of education based on our teaching staff's investment.

My final issue is the fact that if this rule is enforced there will be a significant jump in teacher openings. 72% of 4 day a week teachers are eligible for retirement; what do you think they would do if their weekend gets cut by a day? The lack of teachers already is an issue, I just cannot imagine the Governor of the state ranked dead last in education would make it even harder.

I urge you to dismiss this proposal.

Thank you,

Jake Devine
Capitan Agriculture Educator
Capitan FFA Advisor

From: [Kristin Vanbuskirk](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED proposed rule 6.10.5
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 1:26:03 PM

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

To whom it may concern:

I am an Educational Assistant at Mosquero Municipal Schools, as well as the parent of four children who attend this school. In addition, my husband is one of our school bus drivers. I strongly oppose the proposed rule change that would result in extra days of instructional time, and would force a 5-day week on our traditionally 4-day-week school.

Mosquero Municipal Schools is located in Harding County, the least-populated county in New Mexico. Our district covers more than 1,000 square miles, and many of our students travel more than an hour each way to attend school. An extra day of school not only impacts the significant amount of time they spend traveling and attending school, but also results in much more wear and tear on our school buses that have to travel these long distances every day.

In addition, our Fridays are frequently used for medical appointments. My son recently had to have surgery and is now going to physical therapy once a week. The nearest option for that is 180 miles roundtrip. If I had not been able to schedule those appointments on the Friday we are not in school, he would have to miss almost a full day of school each time.

In sum, the four-day week works for us as a very rural district for several reasons, and I would urge you to reconsider before proposing a blanket rule for every district in a very diverse state.

Thank you,
Kristin Van Buskirk

From: [Robert Brown](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Hadley, Brette](#); [Harris, Dana](#); [Dee, Timberlake](#); [Melissa Durham](#); [EDWARDS, MICAH](#); [Hightower, Niki](#); [Ryan, Autrey](#); [Tim Kasel](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Opposition
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 1:38:55 PM
Attachments: [6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule, Letter of Opposition.pdf](#)

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Please register the attached letter as a letter of input ***against*** the proposed rule 6.10.5. This rule goes completely against state statute and is therefore, not legal. I am quite sure there will be a legal battle regarding this rule if it is passed. Clearly PED has not looked at the data and the states own rankings of schools on a 4-day week, most of which are the highest in the state.

Robert Brown
Superintendent
Texico Municipal Schools
575-482-3801 (W)
575-704-0169 (C)

Go Wolverines Go!!!



Texico Municipal Schools

Home of the
Wolverines

Robert Brown
Superintendent
PO Box 237
520 N. Griffin
Texico, NM 88135
rbrown@texicoschools.com

Telephone (575) 482-3801
Fax (575) 482-3650

December 11, 2023

Dr. Arsenio Romero,

This letter is in reference to and is written with a negative vote for the PED's "6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule". This rule is in direct conflict of multiple state statutes and Public School Code (22-2-8.1) and the Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14). The fact that this proposed rule change is in conflict with the above mentioned statutes, it is illegal for the PED to propose such a rule.

Public School Code, Section 22-2-8.1 speaks specifically of "professional work hours" being included in or may be utilized as a portion of the instructional hours. The proposed regulation requires that the proposed number of days be "exclusive of teacher professional work hours". This would mean that PD be in addition to the 180 calendar days. Also, in regard to this code, it only speaks of a minimum number of instructional hours, not a minimum number of days.

Public School Finance Act, Section 22-8-23.14 authorizes schools or school districts to operate on either a 4-day or 5-day school week. The PED's regulations or rules cannot be in direct conflict with state statute.

Texico Municipal Schools prides itself on the academic success that our students have earned or achieved. Our elementary and middle school are "Schools of Excellence", and our high school is recognized as a "Spotlight School". We have two schools, our high school and middle school, that have recently been recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. Specifically, for "closing the achievement gap". Our expectations are second to none and we have developed the appropriate relationships with this community where our parents support our high expectations, and they assist us in holding students accountable for their success. We are and have been recognized as the number 1 rated school district in the state of New Mexico by Niche, an independent organization that compares schools across each state and the country. All of the success that we have is achieved on a hybrid 4-day week calendar. We have class/instruction for 1246.94 hours, which is well above most 5-day week schools. We have and will continue to work hard to ensure our students success.

The proposed rule will be detrimental to the education of children across our state in many ways. The bulleted points below are just a few of the ways this proposed rule change would be negative for our school district.

- There are 700+ vacancies across the state and we had 4 teachers in our elementary school stated yesterday that they would retire or find something else to do rather than work the additional days. I can only imagine how that number will increase across the state, especially in larger districts.
- Instructional strategies would change, especially at the secondary level, class length would decline. We currently have approximately 55 minutes per class period at our secondary schools which allows for

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Mark Peabody
Member

Tara Carter
Member

teaching of new material, guided/independent practice, assessment, and re-teaching within a class period. With a shorter day, class sizes/length would be reduced to approximately 40 minutes, which would not allow for the above mentioned sequencing of teaching & learning.

- Attendance rates across the state are abysmal and adding another day of instruction would only make it worse. We encourage parents to schedule appointments on Fridays, schedule as many school events as possible on Fridays, therefore not interrupting instruction by having students who participate in co-curricular, extra-curricular activities absent from instruction on Friday.
- Facility and transportation costs would increase by approximately 20%.
- Teacher contracts would have to be extended beyond the 180 days of instruction to account for professional development that will be excluded from the instructional time. We simply do not have the funds to increase salaries.
- Teacher and staff daily rates of pay would decrease. Therefore, devaluing their profession. This is definitely a negative, especially when it is very difficult to fill the positions across the state that are unfilled at this time. It will only get worse if this rule becomes reality.

There has already been one lawsuit filed against PED in regard to “over-reach” and districts losing “local control” and I am sure there will be additional if this proposed rule becomes reality. Texico Municipal Schools will certainly take part in such a suit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Brown", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Brown
Superintendent of Schools
Texico Municipal Schools

From: [Valerie Sahyoun](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:00:03 PM

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To the NMPED Rules Committee,

As a Teacher Mentor in the Socorro Consolidated School District, I am giving my feedback in opposition to Rule 6.10.5, NMAC School Calendar Requirements.

My main concern with this rule change is recruitment and retention of Certified Teachers to our rural school district.

Over a quarter of our certified teaching staff is recruited from surrounding communities. The 4 day week gives the rural school districts an incentive to bring teachers to our understaffed and underserved community. Many of them have told me that they will teach closer to home without having the incentive of the 4 day week.

We have also been able to recruit local community members with a Bachelor's degree to teach in our classrooms through alternative licensure pathways. Very few teachers are coming to us from traditional programs. Teachers on alternative pathways have to complete several hours of coursework in addition to completing the microcredentials or PDD to advance their licensure. In addition, with the Structured Literacy LETRS training requirements for K-5 Teachers, they are completely overwhelmed with the amount of out of classroom work required in addition to lesson planning, grading, parent communication, and other required paperwork. The 4 day week was the deciding factor for most of our alternative licensure teachers to commit themselves to being a teacher. Without having the one day a week to work on all of their required paperwork and training, some have told me they will leave teaching all together and go back to working in the private sector.

The third way we have been able to recruit staff with the 4 day week, is to go to our retired teachers and ask them to return to work. The 4 day week was a deciding factor for almost all of those retirees deciding to return. They are telling us they will most likely resign and go back to retirement.

Without the 4 day week to help us recruit and retain teachers, we will be severely understaffed for next school year. This will be absolutely devastating to the rural communities of New Mexico. Our students deserve to be taught by certified teachers, not long- term substitutes. With the nation-wide teacher shortage, this is

the absolute worst time to invoke a rule that will make it even more challenging to recruit and retain certified staff.

I urge you to reconsider this rule change, as it will have such a detrimental impact on students in Socorro and other rural school districts with a 4 day week.

Sincerely,
Valerie Sahyoun
SCSD Teacher Mentor

From: [Audrey Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day Vs 5 Day as a Special Education Teacher
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:01:58 PM

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Good Afternoon,

It was recently brought to my attention that the NMPED is proposing a rule change that would eliminate 4-day school weeks. I am strongly against this for a few reasons.

First, as a special education teacher, having one day to devote myself to the paperwork that comes with a special education teacher/case manager is ideal. In my case, I use Fridays to prep for IEPs and complete any necessary documentation to keep our school compliant. Monday through Thursday is devoted to servicing the kids. Working at a 5-day a week school caused me stress because it was hard to balance servicing students and paperwork.

Second, because our school is a 4-day a week school, we are able to schedule our staff in a way that provides free after care for our students. Our after care program puts homework help as a priority, and to reiterate, this is free for all parents/guardians to take advantage of.

Third, there is no evidence to support that this mandate will help our children. We are currently ranked in the bottom of the US, and the majority of our schools in New Mexico are 5-day schools. Something does need to change, but it isn't the amount of hours.

My ideal classroom would have a qualified Education Assistant in every classroom. I believe funds to support this model would help our students.

Please consider other options. At this time, the 4-day school week is helping our special education population. Both the teachers, and students benefit from it.

Respectfully,
Audrey Martinez
Special Education Coordinator
Taos Integrated School of the Arts
Phone: 575-758-7755 ext. 1009
Email: audrey@tisataos.org

From: [Javier Arellano](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:04:26 PM

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

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you voice my concerns with 6.10.5 NMAC. I am an educator that works in a district with a 4 day work week. I am completely dissatisfied that the NMPED is attempting to enforce this rule by inserting language into the rule that does not currently exist in New Mexico Statute, and by doing so, will be exerting authority they do not have. It's a move that raises questions about the department's power and the potential infringement on our local autonomy. Furthermore, the proposed amendment from NMPED not only challenges the efficacy of our current school calendar but also threatens the very essence of local control. Our community has thrived on the ability to tailor our school calendar to the unique needs and values of MVCS. The proposed mandate strips away this essential element of local control, undermining our ability to make decisions that best serve our students, parents, and educators.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Javier Arellano MVCDAFT Vice President

From: [Patricia Lamb](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@tfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:04:47 PM

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The changes to the calendar this year have done little to improve instruction and learning outcomes. The changes have actually done a lot to disrupt instruction, particularly in October and November. The starts and stops over the past 2 months have caused sporadic instruction, reduced continuity & has put many educators behind in their curriculum.

Changing the calendar again will not aid in better educational outcomes. It will aid in frustrations already felt across the school districts in the state of New Mexico. I have spoken to a few families that have expressed so much frustration with the new calendar, if it is changed yet again, they will put their children in private school.

We do not need more of the same things for longer periods of time. We need more support personnel (counselors, therapists, security & law enforcement, speech pathologists, behavioral redirectors, paraprofessionals, M & O workers, vice principals) for the day-to-day operations that occur in schools. Teachers are strapped for time not because they need more of it, but because they are doing the jobs of educating, counseling, redirecting, disciplining and documenting everything involving all of these student facets without support.

Schools need more support, not more calendar time. Please understand this. So many of us just want to teach & not have to also raise these children. It simply cannot be done. More help, not more time.

--

Patti Medley Lamb
Hubert Humphrey Elementary
Music Teacher, APS
210-338-6703

"Music is moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and charm and gaiety to life and to everything."-Plato

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From: [Gianetta Lark](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NM HB130 Feedback Opposition Letter 11.27.2023
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:17:21 PM

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

Please see attached document opposing NM HB130 proposal.

 [NM HB130 Feedback Opposition Letter 11.27.2023](#)

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Gianetta Lark
MHS Science
FFA Advisor
575-854-8037

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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. School districts across New Mexico are unique, and should not be forced to comply with a one size fits all mentality.

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 in 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. As a graduate of a rural high school with a 4-day school week, I can personally attest to the endless benefits. Part of the reason I became an educator is to be able to return home and teach where I grew up, and the 4-day week is only part of the benefits to teaching in Magdalena Schools.

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?

Sincerely,

A Concerned Educator

From: [Smith, Mike](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:19:48 PM

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

Good afternoon.

I agree that more instructional time is valuable, but we can significantly increase real opportunities for instruction without lengthening school days or adding days to the calendar. I was a software engineer before starting a second career in special education. When I became a teacher, I spent considerable time in general education classrooms supporting my students. After years of fine-tuning software to save milliseconds, I was shocked at the minutes, even hours, that I saw wasted in most classrooms. Teachers are clearly not trained to use time efficiently. Most teachers are not even aware of how much time is wasted during a typical school day. I challenge you to spend some days observing random classrooms. Record the amount of time in which students actually receive instruction. Notice how much time is spent transitioning from one subject to another, gathering materials and waiting for instructions on how to do things that should be established routines. An amazing amount of time is wasted arriving in the morning and leaving in the afternoon. How long do students stand in line waiting for an inefficient lunch service? What goes on during the hour it takes to hold a 30-minute assembly?

The money spent to increase the number of hours that teachers and students are in school would be better spent on doing a study on classroom time management, developing best practices, and then funding time management coaches in each district. I have absolutely no doubt that the amount of instructional time gained from decreasing inefficiencies will be significantly greater than any amount of additional poorly-used time that you could mandate.

Thanks for your consideration.

Mike Smith
Education Department
Pueblo of Pojoaque

Dear, members of the PED,

I am Aliza Apache, I am a student from Magdalena High School and I want to speak on the topic that our state is debating right now on behalf of my school. When it comes to the amount of school days that are required, our school only has four days, and it's been that way since I was in pre-school. Although the State feels that there are plenty of pros, there are also plenty of cons when it comes to making it mandatory that all schools in New Mexico are required to go five days. Although there are already some schools that do have five days my opinion goes against the grain.

My reasoning behind why I do not agree with it is because around New Mexico there are already a lot of struggles that schools are facing and attendance is one of the biggest ones, if students aren't already showing up for four days what do you think is gonna happen when you add another day to the week. The rates of attendance are going to drop and this is proven to be true in my school. At the beginning of the school year, we had a power outage for 3 days, we had to miss a whole week of school but our school arranged makeup days, these days fell on 3 different Fridays in the fall semester. For those days that were arranged the percentage rate for attendance was low. For middle through high school, the percentage ranges from only 67% of the high school students showing up and only 77% of students showed up for the middle school for those days. The importance of this is to show that high schoolers skipped the makeup day as they could drive themselves. The middle schoolers didn't show up because their parent didn't participate in this make-up day.

The factors that affect attendance vary, we all are different people with different things that take place in our lives daily and I feel that some students struggle with just getting through the week, and adding on another day is going to make it harder for those students that are just struggling to just show up for four days. There are students such as me that care a lot about their attendance and being that I care so much I use the day I have off which is Friday to schedule appointments and to do other things I can not quite do in the week. I do not have to worry about missing school and I feel that a lot of students can agree with that. Taking that day away from students as well as teachers can cause a lot of issues especially attendance-wise. Some students already are struggling to keep up with their work and adding another day is going to add on extra work which will increase stress levels.

There is plenty of things that will be affected on student's behalf if there is a day added to the week, especially in rural areas such as ours. Plenty of students work on ranches being we live in such a small community and I know that a lot of them use the three-day weekend to get their ranch work done taking this day away from them can affect them

and what they need to get done. Not only does this affect students but it also affects teachers and parents being they too own and work on ranches. Especially in rural areas money is crucial for schools. The expenses of buses, electricity, food, etc. will increase and that will cause issues within the school. There will be less and less money to pay for extra things our school may need and talking financially wise teachers will want a raise for working more days than usual. We have teachers, students, and parents who live quite far out of town, and driving to school every day is even a hassle cause gas is expensive, adding on another day will cause more expenses even to them. There is a great chance of losing students, and even staff to this.

I as a student would find it very hard to work around this day being added because I am a very involved person I participate in sports, student council, and FFA which shows how busy of a student I am. This will affect attendance for all students who are involved in these things because I know how busy they tend to be. FFA usually tends to have practice and even competitions on Fridays, even the student council uses Fridays for planning, and especially with sports plenty of days are already being missed for games so making Friday considered a school day will affect attendance rates even more. These Fridays are very important to us all because everyone I know uses them for something important with it either being used for appointments, games, practice, competitions, or even just for a day to breathe and have it off. All together this is mainly going to affect attendance making it worse.

I hope you consider this and see how much these Fridays off help us and mean to us, thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Aliza Apache

From: [Kristina Sampsel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@union.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:47:11 PM

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

To Whom it may concern,

HB130 was passed and enacted expanding our school year just recently. I am appalled that the PED is proposing a rule change and circumventing the legislature. With all the time, money and people at the table to enact HB 130 and make it happen, why on earth would you make changes at this time? Where is the data to suggest this change is needed? Have you considered the impact of such a large schedule change on family work schedules, employee work schedules and much needed time off for student and employee happiness and wellness?

Respectfully, Kristina Sampsel,

--

Kristina Sampsel, MOTR/L
3911 Hannett Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Email: x7.kris@gmail.com
Cell: (505) 321-7804

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From: [D.E](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org; [Courtney Jackson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 2:47:20 PM
Attachments: [6.10.5 NMAC.pdf](#)

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

NM PED voting members,

I am writing to express my concern with 6.10.5 NMAC, in regards to the school calendar requirements. During the 2022-23 session the changes to the 23-24 school year calendar were agreed upon, and educators and families raced to meet the quickly made changes. This recent bait and switch attempt to add days and/or hours to the calendar is disappointing political grandstanding, which will not improve educational outcomes for NM students.

As an educator (Professional School Counselor, MS, NBCC) I know that this arbitrary one-size-fits-all approach to educational reform will not change the current issues within the NM educational system. Research overwhelmingly supports* the notion that real change is seen when students (and their families) receive support before they enter the school building. Children zero to five years of age need societal support, and those programs need more financial backing from politically decided budgets. Once students enter school they need to have access to highly qualified and well compensate educators, who feel supported by their schools, districts, and politicians. Also, students and educators need to come to learn/work in buildings that are clean/safe/updated structures, have lower student-to-teacher ratios, access to enough supplies, consistent heat and cooling, and access to appropriate educational technology. These are the programs and initiatives that need your financial backing, not constant tweaking of days/hours.

As a parent of two APS students I am tired of the constant change to our family's schedule and time together. We value the hours and days we have to be together; to participate in educational activities of our choosing, to travel, and to attend important family events and activities. We make financial and personal sacrifices to support and raise our children to be happy and contributing members of society. However, the constant need to play childcare catch-up is detrimental to our family values and causes us to sacrifice further, with the loss of important family time together. As a dual-working family, we are exhausted by the constant reconfiguring of our work and extracurricular schedules to fit the whims of politicians, politicians who only want to have a quick go-to solution, without any merit behind it.

Within education, parenting, and many other facets of life consistency is key.

New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave
Santa Fe, NM 87501

December 11, 2023

NM PED voting members,

I am writing to express my concern with 6.10.5 NMAC, in regards to the school calendar requirements. During the 2022-23 session the changes to the 23-24 school year calendar were agreed upon, and educators and families raced to meet the quickly made changes. This recent bait and switch attempt to add days and/or hours to the calendar is disappointing political grandstanding, which will not improve educational outcomes for NM students.

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Within education, parenting, and many other facets of life consistency is key. If you truly want to improve the state of NM education, stop fiddling with the calendar and allow for consistency to take place, put much needed money into the support of 0-5 year olds and their families, support highly qualified educators with appropriate pay and adequate working conditions from which to do their jobs. Then, you will start to see improvement within the educational system.

Thank you for your time,
Devon Ehardt Shelton
ehardt2882@yahoo.com
12032 Gazelle Pl NE
Albuquerque. NM 87111

CC: APS School Board Member, District 7
ATF Union

* Sources

- [Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#). (2015), National Library of Medicine, Allen et al.
- [Early Childhood and Education](#), health.gov
- [Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education](#). Society for Research in Child Development

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- [Early Childhood and Education](#), health.gov
- [Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education](#). Society for Research in Child Development

Devon Ehardt Shelton
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From: [Kali Norman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:03:18 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gasper Ave., Room 121
Sante Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an eighth grader student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, I do not agree with the schools calendar change of 180 days (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). My school goes four days with a three-day weakened. With a three-day weakened I use this weekend to help my dad or mom, My dad has his own business he drives trucks including hauling hay, cow, peanuts, and many more things; we go and help him almost every weakened so time for him goes faster not having to do as many things or be as tired as night. My mom works at the hospital so if she is at work or if we are not working with my dad, me and my siblings try and pick up at the house or make dinner. Sports are also happening on the weekends, so we are tired and very exhausted so it's good just to have a day to rest. The high gas prices make it harder to travel to and from school on an additional day a week.

I think that you should take into consideration that schools should control how their schools' calendars are set up.

A Concerned Student,
-Kali Norman

From: [Julia Cacy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:03:34 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
3000 Don Gasper Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am a middle schooler at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I recently moved from Albuquerque, New Mexico and I was used to the five-day school week, but when I moved to a four-day school week I have never been so grateful for the change. Ever since moving I had three-day weekend and every weekend I would always work with my steers and heifers get ready for the fair. If we did change to a five-day school week the attendance would decrease as well because most people must do activities on the three-day weekend like rodeo, fairs, FFA speaking competitions, and most importantly traveling. Most students that I know do their traveling on a Friday and if small schools like mine change to 180 days (6.10.5.7C. NMAC SCHOOL CALANDER REQUIRMENTS) then more than half of the school would be missing on that Friday to do traveling. So, it won't be as influential as the New Mexico Public Education Department thinks because most students will not be attending that Friday anyway.

When I have four-day week every day after school I try to spend as much time as I can with my mom. On my three day weekends I also spend quality family time with my mom and grandparents. My mom has stage 3 cancer and ever since I heard the news I make sure I spend as much time with her as I can. Family time is deeply important to me and with my three day weekend I get more things done and work extra hard during my four day week. When you count up all the time my mom and family members has missed work for traveling to do her treatments it is a lot. I know that my family tries to not miss lots of work, but how she gets her treatment she has to travel two hours away from home to Lubbock, Texas since we live in an isolated area. My mom mostly goes on a Friday and since I have no school that day, I always go with her as well does my grandma. As of right now I have only had 1 unexcused absence out of the whole school year. If we ever switch to a five-day work week, I know I will be missing more, which is not ok for learning and could harm my attendance.

Every morning I wake up at 5:00 am. I have to get ready in less than 30 minutes, so I

can be on time to go to my uncle's house then go to school. School is about an hour away from my house and school starts at 7:42 which is honestly difficult to make it on time for the bus as well. I have never ridden the bus, but I know my friends struggle making it on time to get there so the bus doesn't leave them. If our school had to go that extra day, my uncle would not be able to take me to school since he has to work with cattle and more. I know if we had to go that extra day many students will have a difficult time making it there, being motivated, having a hard time to stay awake during class because their use to the four-day week, and many financial problems like keeping the lights on, the plumbing, and electricity. I really do hope we don't have to go to that extra day then many will have a hard time adjusting. Please take this into consideration that many will struggle to comprehend that they will go to school on a Friday and the school will have to spend more money on electricity.

A Concerned Student,

Julia Cacy.

From: [Lacey Victor](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:03:35 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an eighth-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am not very happy about the idea of a 180-day school year (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIERMENTS). I am a very busy girl that does 3 sports plus rodeo and have to balance my work schedule at home on the ranch. I don't think that this proposal is necessary to have a 5-day week. If we were to have a 5-day school week, I would be missing almost every Friday because I have rodeos almost every weekend and must travel to many different places that are far away. I think the attendance would be affected because kids don't show up as often anyways and if we add more days less kids will be attending school less. In the past years we have had a 4-day week and have met the standards that we need to meet. Also, thinking about our community, it is way different than a big town like Albuquerque or Santa Fe compared to Elida because 85% of the students and teachers are ranchers here and have ranching to do on the weekends that improves our knowledge. Our community is very different than others, so I think it should be a community choice.

A Concerned Student,

Lacey Victor

From: [Hailly Faucett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter To State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:03:56 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division

New Mexico Public Education Department

300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

My name is Hailly, and I am in eighth-grade at Elida Schools in Elida, New Mexico. My mind has been on the proposal (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS) of having all schools in the entire state come into school 180 days (about 6 months) in a year. I do not live in Elida; I live in Portales NM about 25 miles away. Adding those days would add a lot of money my family must spend on gas instead of other things we need. Not having this calendar change would save my family money in more ways than just gas; my school only goes four days a week so on Fridays while my parents work, I take care of my younger siblings. If I take care of them my parents do not have to pay for someone to take care of them, especially the youngest two that are not in school yet.

I do not feel that adding extra days would really make me learn more. We would still learn the same things, but it would only be stretched out more. I am a straight A student, and I am able to have those grades without going to school 180 days a year. I believe that I will be able to be just as successful without going to school more than I am now.

A Concerned Student,

Hailly Faucett

From: [Noah Green](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:04:25 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am writing this letter as an eighth grade student who goes to school at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am, along with most of the school, upset about the proposal for schools to go 180 days. (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDER REQUIREMENTS) Many schools, such as ours, are in a rural area that goes on a four-day week. Here, we have different lifestyles than large cities, as we frequently have things such as rodeos on Fridays and hunting trips that are frequently day long trips, which means that you will either get home late at night, which is not good for your well-being, or you would have to spend the night, meaning that you will most likely have to miss church in the morning. Many other people work on a ranch, meaning that they have jobs to do on Fridays. Our school is also 30 minutes away from the nearest town, so if you live in town, it will take 2 hours in total to go to school the next day, which will make you pay much more for gas.

Also, our school does have better testing scores than many other schools that go 5 days a week, which proves that the number of days a school goes does not negatively affect a student's learning capability, and instead is more likely to help it. A school that goes four days a week is also more likely to have a positive effect on mental health. We still get the same amount of time at school in the long run when you consider the amount of hours we spend at school. If anything, we learn more due to longer classes, therefore we will be able to understand it more. We have, along with higher test scores, higher attendance rates and higher graduation rates, showing that a four day week makes students want to go to school more.

This proposal is ridiculous, as lifestyles are different here than they are in cities, and we have proof that four day schools are even more successful than ones that go five days a week.

A Concerned Student,

Noah Green

From: [Joel Woodruff](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] letter to state.
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:05:08 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an 8th grader at Elida NM, And I find the proposal to change the calendar for schools to 180 days (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS) Preposterous. I am the son of two parents who both work at my school, and even with a four-day week it puts a toll on my parents, but if we went five days it would ruin their schedule and give them no break in their Lives. The break that we get with the 3 days allows us to recuperate and have a fun time. We get to have our own time and my parents can finish grading their papers. That's why I think we should be able to do our own calendar for our school.

From a concerned student,

Joel Woodruff

From: [Kallee Cochie](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:07:42 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and Legislative Affairs Division

New Mexico Public Education Department

300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121

Sante Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an eighth-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am not comfortable with the proposed school calendar change to 180 days. (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDER REQUIRERMENTS). My school's three-day weekend is very important to me and my community. Having a three-day weekend means that I can spend more time with my family. I am 13 years old, and I am trying to make money, and on my Fridays, I enjoy babysitting. Without the three-day weekend I cannot babysit. I don't just want this money to be spent on things that I do not need. I need my money to buy certain things for sports like my track spikes or my basketball and volleyball shoes because with enough practice I might be able to get a scholarship to get into a good college. I also do motorcross and without my three-day weekend I can't load my dirt bikes and gear up in time for my races. Without my school's three-day weekend my friends in my school will have an even worse mental health because that is even more school for us to already be attending so we will have to wake up at 5:30 another morning just to feed all our animals and to get ready for school. Another issue is our gas prices because some of us live farther than others. It is really expensive for all the gas and you wanting to change our calendar does not help.

A Concerned Student,

Kallee Cochie

From: [Roxanna Garcia](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:07:43 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an eighth-grade student at Elida Municipal Schools in Elida, New Mexico. I am very agitated by the school calendar changing to 180 days (6.10.5.7. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). We live in a small hardworking community and our school goes on four days a week and with a three-day weekend and it is quite easy to live by. My family is busy and hard working so the three-day weekend helps us to get all our work done. I always come home from school with a good amount of homework, but I have enough time to do it along with my other chores. Our four-day week is enough school for the students, we learn just what we need to, and it is not stressful because too much school can damage a child's mental health. Family time can be damaged too and a lot of people in my school put a lot of time into their family.

I love school but not too much of it and our amount of free time is just enough, things will be difficult if we have more school.

A Concerned Student,
Roxanna Garcia

From: [Monica Burton](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:26:36 PM

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

New Mexico Public Education Department,

My name is Monica Burton, I am the parent of a student at Springer Municipal Schools and a School Board Member here for the last eight years. Three of my four children have graduated from Springer High. Two of my three graduates have chosen to attend college. One has her bachelor's degree and the other is currently on the Dean's List at NMSU.

I am writing in defense of the four-day week school calendar. Four-day school weeks have been in place here for FORTY years and *work* for our small rural schools. Here are some of the reasons why:

- Students have the same or *more* class time per subject. Our current school day is from 7:30am to 4:00pm. Five-day weeks **SHORTEN** the school day (8:00am to 2:30pm) but have approximately the same hours of class time total per week. *Longer* classes=**more** quality instruction.
- Extracurricular activities (sports, college fairs, doctor visits) can take place Thursday evening through Saturday evening and **AVOID** interrupting the school day.
- Our students test at or above the average in New Mexico.
- Overhead expenses are minimized or eliminated one day out of the week (fuel, food, utilities). Our small budgets get a **HUGE** break with four-day week.
- Four-day weeks are a major perk in hiring and retaining staff in our rural (not so popular) communities.

Our area has a **HUGE** number of home-schoolers. We do not need *one* more reason to lose students.

We all know successful students. Please ask yourselves, what are the key factors in student success? What do the best students have in common? Do the most successful students attend school for the maximum number of hours possible? In **MY** experience, the most successful students come from stable families. What can you do to encourage and cultivate **THAT** in the state of New Mexico?

Thank you for your time,

Monica Burton

From: [Neava Terry](#)
To: [Alcon, Eliseo Lee](#); [anthony.allison@nmlegis.gov](#); [Janelle.Anyanonu](#); [gail@gailfornewmexico.com](#); [John.Block@nmlegis.gov](#); [Cynthia.Borrego@nmlegis.gov](#); [c.brown.nm55@gmail.com](#); [micaela.cadena@nmlegis.gov](#); [ambrose.castellano@nmlegis.gov](#); [Kathleen.Cates@nmlegis.gov](#); [Chasey, Gail](#); [jack.chatfield@nmlegis.gov](#); [Eleanor.Chavez@nmlegis.gov](#); [art.delacruz@nmlegis.gov](#); [Dixon, Meredith](#); [Mark.Duncan@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ferrary, Joanne J.](#); [natalie.figueroa@nmlegis.gov](#); [Gallegos, Doreen Y.](#); [hgarciad69](#); [Garcia, Miguel P.](#); [joy.garratt](#); [JasonHarperNM](#); [joshua.hernandez](#); [pamelya.herndon@nmlegis.gov](#); [dayan.hochman-vigil@nmlegis.gov](#); [Tara.Jaramillo@nmlegis.gov](#); [Johnson, Wonda D.](#); [Jenifer.Jones@nmlegis.gov](#); [ryan@laneforalliberty.com](#); [raymundo.lara@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lente, Derrick L.](#); [stefani.lord@nmlegis.gov](#); [tara.lujan@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lundstrom, Patricia A.](#); [willie.madrid@nmlegis.gov](#); [Alan.Martinez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Martinez, Javier](#); [Jimmy.Mason@nmlegis.gov](#); [McQueen, Matthew](#); [Tanya.MirabalMoya@nmlegis.gov](#); [Montoya, Rod](#); [Nibert, Greg](#); [kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov](#); [randall.pettigrew@nmlegis.gov](#); [Andrea.Reeb@nmlegis.gov](#); [andrea@andrearomero.com](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#); [Roybal Caballero, Patricia](#); [Rubio, Angelica](#); [joseph.sanchez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Sarinana, Debra M.](#); [Scott, Larry R.](#); [linda.serrato@nmlegis.gov](#); [Small, Nathan P.](#); [Reena.Szczepanski@nmlegis.gov](#); [luis.terrazas@nmlegis.gov](#); [Thomson, Elizabeth](#); [townsend@pvtm.net](#); [Harlan.Vincent@nmlegis.gov](#); [martin.zamora@nmlegis.gov](#); [greg.baca@nmlegis.gov](#); [Brandt, Craig W.](#); [Burt, William F.](#); [Campos, Pete](#); [joseph.cervantes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Maestas, Antonio](#); [crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov](#); [katy.duhigg@nmlegis.gov](#); [david@ramirezandsonsinc.com](#); [Gonzales, Roberto J.](#); [Griggs, Ron](#); [carrie.hamblen@nmlegis.gov](#); [siah.hemphill](#); [martin.hickey@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ivey-Soto, Daniel](#); [Jaramillo, Leo](#); [Kernan, Gay](#); [Lopez, Linda M.](#); [brenda.mckenna@nmlegis.gov](#); [Moores, Mark](#); [George Munoz](#); [Neville, Steven P.](#); [BILL@BILLONEILL4NM.COM](#); [Ortiz y Pino, Gerald](#); [Padilla, Michael](#); [shannon.pinto@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pirtle, Cliff R.](#); [harold.popejr](#); [Istefanics@msn.com](#); [Rodriguez, Nancy](#); [Steinborn, Jeff](#); [jas4nm@gmail.com](#); [Stewart, Mimi](#); [gregg.schmedes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Tallman, Bill](#); [a.sedillolopez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Wirth, Peter](#); [Sharer, William E.](#); [Woods, Pat](#); [Shendo, Benny](#); [Soules, William P.](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against 5 day a week school requirement.
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:28:39 PM

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NM State Legislator:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day week within our educational system. As a concerned citizen and educator deeply invested in the welfare of our schools and communities, I implore you to reconsider this change for several critical reasons.

Firstly, the shift to a 5-day week risks the premature retirement of dedicated educators who have structured their lives around the current schedule. Many seasoned teachers have adapted their personal and professional commitments to the 4-day format, and altering this could force them into an unwelcome early exit from their careers, causing a significant loss of experience and expertise in our schools.

Moreover, the potential loss of qualified staff is a genuine concern. The appeal of a 4-day week has attracted skilled educators to our district, contributing to its strength and success. Reverting to a 5-day model risks losing these valuable professionals, impacting the quality of education offered to our students.

Additionally, the transition may lead to a decline in student enrollment. Families have chosen our district based on the unique structure and benefits of a 4-day school week. Altering this could prompt families to seek alternatives, resulting in a loss of students and associated

funding.

It's important to note that current data has demonstrated the success of schools operating on a 4-day schedule. These institutions have shown high performance, indicating that the current system is effective in fostering academic achievement and student success.

Furthermore, the financial implications of this change cannot be ignored. The costs associated with reverting to a 5-day week—such as increased transportation, utility expenses, and operational overhead—will strain the budget. This allocation of resources away from educational programs and other critical areas could detrimentally affect the holistic development of our students.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to consider the long-term impact on educators, students, and the overall educational quality before proceeding with this proposed change. Instead, let us focus on supporting and enhancing the successful 4-day model that has proven to benefit our local community and its educational goals.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. I trust that your decision will prioritize the best interests of our educators, students, and the educational system as a whole.

Sincerely,
Neava Terry

199 SRR AE
Portales, NM 88130
nterry@floydbroncos.com

From: [Kellie Hartman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four Day Week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:30:26 PM

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Greetings:

I am Kellie Hartman, I teach at Snell Middle School in the Cobre District. I have been in this district for 36 years in elementary, high school and middle school. I am VERY concerned about the proposed rule change for the four day week in our state.

There are many reasons that we changed to the four day week years ago. I do NOT feel that adding a day to the school week is going to improve academic quality. We are having a difficult time getting students to attend on four days and they have emphatically stated that they would NOT come on Fridays-so this would increase our absences.

I personally know home school students that only attend classes in the mornings and their academic success is very high-at half the hours!

I can tell you that we just completed the IMSSA assessment for our middle school. I am the reading interventionist and I have seen great improvement in their assessment scores-some gaining 54, 43, 28, 31, 19...points. My program is basically pull-out for only twenty minutes.

We all know as educators it is quality not quantity. Throwing more hours at the problem is just like throwing more money at the problem-it doesn't work.

We are in a low socioeconomic area and many of our students do not have parent support, homes, food, or encouragement to succeed. It is very difficult to educate students from this type of background. Cell phone usage is another issue that impedes student progress.

We also have a difficult time getting people to apply for open positions. Many of the people that do apply state that the four day week was what attracted them to apply.

Those of us in a rural setting would hate to see the loss of the four day week after we fought so hard to acquire it. It was a community decision with a lot of thought put into it.

Please reconsider the proposed change back to a five day week. Much of the country's businesses are now changing to four days-let us be progressive in our thinking.

Respectfully,
Kellie Hartman
SMS Reading Interventionist

From: [Sandra Cope](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:47:14 PM

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

Please do not implement these changes! Educators are against this. I am against this.

The job of Teacher is the only job I've ever had where I was expected, even required, to work beyond the hours of my duty time.

I urge you to not implement these proposed changes.

Sandra Cope

6th Grade History Teacher

Lincoln Middle School

505-962-3309

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From: [Garratt, Joy](#)
To: [Neava Terry](#)
Cc: [Alcon, Eliseo Lee](#); [anthony.allison@nmlegis.gov](#); [Janelle Anyanonu](#); [gail@gailfornewmexico.com](#); [Block, John](#); [Borrego, Cynthia](#); [c.brown.nm55@gmail.com](#); [Cadena, Micaela](#); [ambrose.castellano@nmlegis.gov](#); [Cates, Kathleen](#); [Chasey, Gail](#); [jack.chatfield@nmlegis.gov](#); [Chavez, Eleanor](#); [DeLaCruz, Art](#); [Dixon, Meredith](#); [Duncan, Mark](#); [Ferrary, Joanne J.](#); [Figueroa, Natalie](#); [Gallegos, Doreen Y.](#); [hgarcia69](#); [Garcia, Miguel P.](#); [JasonHarperNM](#); [joshua.hernandez](#); [pamelya.herndon@nmlegis.gov](#); [dayan.hochman-vigil@nmlegis.gov](#); [Jaramillo, Tara](#); [Johnson, Wonda D.](#); [Jones, Jenifer](#); [ryan@laneforalliberty.com](#); [raymundo.lara@nmlegis.gov](#); [Lente, Derrick L.](#); [Lord, Stefani](#); [Lujan, Tara](#); [Lundstrom, Patricia A.](#); [Madrid, Willie](#); [Martinez, Alan](#); [Martinez, Javier](#); [Mason, Jimmy](#); [McQueen, Matthew](#); [MirabalMoya, Tanya](#); [Montoya, Rod](#); [Nibert, Greg](#); [kristina.ortez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pettigrew, Randall](#); [Reeb, Andrea](#); [andrea@andrearomero.com](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#); [Roybal Caballero, Patricia](#); [Rubio, Angelica](#); [joseph.sanchez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Sarinana, Debra M.](#); [Scott, Larry R.](#); [Serrato, Linda](#); [Small, Nathan P.](#); [Reena.Szczepanski@nmlegis.gov](#); [Terrazas, Luis](#); [Thomson, Elizabeth](#); [townsend@pvt.net](#); [Vincent, Harlan](#); [martin.zamora@nmlegis.gov](#); [Baca, Gregory A.](#); [Brandt, Craig W.](#); [Burt, William F.](#); [Campos, Pete](#); [joseph.cervantes@nmlegis.gov](#); [Maestas, Antonio](#); [crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov](#); [katy.duhigg@nmlegis.gov](#); [david@ramirezandsonsinc.com](#); [Gonzales, Roberto J.](#); [Griggs, Ron](#); [carrie.hamblen@nmlegis.gov](#); [siah.hemphill](#); [martin.hickey@nmlegis.gov](#); [Ivey-Soto, Daniel](#); [Jaramillo, Leo](#); [Kernan, Gay](#); [Lopez, Linda M.](#); [McKenna, Brenda](#); [Moores, Mark](#); [George Munoz](#); [Neville, Steven P.](#); [bill@billoneill4nm.com](#); [Ortiz y Pino, Gerald](#); [Padilla, Michael](#); [shannon.pinto@nmlegis.gov](#); [Pirtle, Cliff R.](#); [harold.popejr](#); [lstepanics@msn.com](#); [Rodriguez, Nancy](#); [Steinborn, Jeff](#); [jas4nm@gmail.com](#); [Stewart, Mimi](#); [Schmedes, Gregg](#); [Tallman, Bill](#); [a.sedillolopez@nmlegis.gov](#); [Wirth, Peter](#); [Sharer, William E.](#); [Woods, Pat](#); [Shendo, Benny](#); [Soules, William P.](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: Re: [EXT] Against 5 day a week school requirement.
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:54:20 PM

Neava,
Thanks for writing. The PED is going around the legislative process and proposing these changes on their own. Should they insist on putting these rules in place, which contradict HB130 (hours, not days, so 4 day weeks are acceptable), there will be consequences, possibly some lawsuits from districts.
There is strong opposition to the PED's rules from districts, schools and legislators, including myself.
Sincerely,
Rep. Garratt

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 11, 2023, at 3:28 PM, Neava Terry <nterry@floydbroncos.com> wrote:

NM State Legislator:

I am writing to express deep concern regarding the proposed transition from a 4-day school week to a 5-day week within our educational system. As a concerned citizen and educator deeply invested in the welfare of our schools and communities, I implore you to reconsider this change for several critical reasons.

Firstly, the shift to a 5-day week risks the premature retirement of dedicated educators who have structured their lives around the current schedule. Many seasoned teachers have adapted their personal and professional commitments to the 4-day format, and altering this could force them into an unwelcome early exit

from their careers, causing a significant loss of experience and expertise in our schools.

Moreover, the potential loss of qualified staff is a genuine concern. The appeal of a 4-day week has attracted skilled educators to our district, contributing to its strength and success. Reverting to a 5-day model risks losing these valuable professionals, impacting the quality of education offered to our students.

Additionally, the transition may lead to a decline in student enrollment. Families have chosen our district based on the unique structure and benefits of a 4-day school week. Altering this could prompt families to seek alternatives, resulting in a loss of students and associated funding.

It's important to note that current data has demonstrated the success of schools operating on a 4-day schedule. These institutions have shown high performance, indicating that the current system is effective in fostering academic achievement and student success.

Furthermore, the financial implications of this change cannot be ignored. The costs associated with reverting to a 5-day week—such as increased transportation, utility expenses, and operational overhead—will strain the budget. This allocation of resources away from educational programs and other critical areas could detrimentally affect the holistic development of our students.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to consider the long-term impact on educators, students, and the overall educational quality before proceeding with this proposed change. Instead, let us focus on supporting and enhancing the successful 4-day model that has proven to benefit our local community and its educational goals.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter. I trust that your decision will prioritize the best interests of our educators, students, and the educational system as a whole.

Sincerely,
Neava Terry

199 SRR AE
Portales, NM 88130
nterry@floydbroncos.com

From: [LuEmma Floyd](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mandatory 5 day school week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:58:47 PM

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To Whom It Concern:

This letter is in response to the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar requirement.

As a teacher in a rural school district I do not feel like this would be beneficial in any way to students or teachers. There is no research or proof that shows a 5-day week is better for overall student performance. I think the evidence shows the very opposite in fact. Rural districts already on a 4-day school week are out performing many schools in bigger districts who attend school for 5 days.

As a rural district I am certain we will lose good, experienced, and qualified teachers who will choose to, in some cases, no longer commute to our small school and find work out of state. This benefits no one and will in fact hurt our students. We already struggle to find highly qualified teachers who are willing to come to a small town. The five day commute will not be worth their time and money.

Keeping students longer and longer is not the answer to what is happening in the education system in our State. We instead need to be educating parents on their role in raising children and quit putting so much of their responsibility on schools.

I hope you have time to listen to what is being said and give small districts the attention they deserve. This is not a one size fits all kind of rule and it shouldn't be regarded as such. Our students deserve better than that.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

LuEmma Floyd

From: [rachel delagarza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirement
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:02:20 PM

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I want to keep it the same as it is Monday -Thursday, My daughter rest on a three day weekend. And Friday is a good day to make appointment so she doesn't miss any school days of the week.

From: [Mario Contreras](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:02:47 PM

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6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements I want to keep it the same the way it is Monday-Thursday, cuz my daughter rest on a three day weekend. And Friday is good day to make any doctors appointments so she won't miss any school days of the week

From: [Owen Whooley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:03:30 PM

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While I applaud the state's commitment to approving education outcomes, this move by PED usurps the democratic process. The state legislature passed a bill that went into effect not 4 months ago. Now, claiming that the bill has not improved outcomes - a determination that is far too premature - PED and its largely unelected officials - have decided to go around the legislature to propose changes. This is unacceptable and I fear it will lead to challenges in teacher retention as well as extra burdens on families, who are already struggling to adjust to the new calendar.

Once again, increasing instructional hours is something I support. But those determinations should be made through the proper democratic channels, not willy nilly by PED.

From: [Jim Nesbitt](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change for 4 day districts
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:13:37 PM

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This rule change is another example of the state continuing to remove local control. Local school districts are governed by an elected board of education. These boards are elected by their community to make good decisions to enhance the quality education of our children.

The Capitan municipal schools went through the required procedure to convert to a 4 day school week in the early 2000's. This change was very well excepted by the community. It has served our families and our community very well. When we compare our test scores, attendance and graduation rate to those of 5 day school weeks, in most cases we equal or exceed other districts.

I implore you to abandon this rule change and allow school districts and boards of education their ability to make the decisions for the community and students that they were elected to accomplish.

Jim Nesbitt
Capitan School Board President
Jim.nesbitt@yahoo.com
575-740-1537
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Allyn Harad](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Longer days? more work? still not enough pay because our raise goes straight to increased health insurance
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:20:21 PM

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Come and talk to us. Listen to us. We see the changes on a daily basis. Come and talk in person. Listen to our stories and wisdom. You want to understand the reasons for absenteeism and high drop out rates and mental health issues? We can fill your books with story after story. Fill your notes with our stories so you can make better discussions and decisions. How can you make policies with very little factual knowledge? Pledge to meet the teachers and the counselors and the principals. Then we won't quit and call in sick or feel unsupported or depressed and stressed. We will then know you care.

Mental health has sky rocketed. I remember 12 years ago one to two students per every three to four classrooms were showing difficulties. Six years ago I noticed almost every classroom had one to two students with some mental health issue. Now? Every classroom has more than half of the students with some form of irregular behavior, let alone with some sort of trauma and it is seeping down to kindergartners.

Learning goes without saying that either the students have extreme apathy or no hope, they are bored, they are acting out and there are no consequences from the parents. We are pushing them beyond their limits. Test. Test. Test. TikTok is their escape. Opportunities? Many students are not interested in college. Many prefer trade school careers. Bring them back. Teach math, yes but include the practicality of math or science. Carpentry. Electrical Engineering. Nursing. Hair Stylist. Construction. Plumbing. Car Mechanics. Airplane Mechanics. Graphic Art. Economics. Relationship 101. Parenting 101?

Please do not tell us what to do to change before you make changes without talking to us.

From: [Lisa Rubin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] More work days
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 4:26:20 PM

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The idea to extend teachers contracts by 10 days is going to hurt morale. If we used the days we have more efficiently we wouldn't need more days. For example Advisory does not need to be as long as it is, we don't need as many district PLCs either.

Lisa Rubin
Capital High School
Freshman Seminar Teacher
lrubin@sfps.k12.nm.us

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From: [Cristine Faseler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regarding the Proposed Changes to School Hours
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 5:05:36 PM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Cristine Faseler, and I am a teacher at Los Alamos High School. I recently learned of the proposed changes to New Mexico's school year, and I need to make my concerns known.

Where is the data to justify such a decision? With what legal standing does the PED get to set district level policy in this manner? Our school year has already been extended once, and not even a year later we're looking to do so again. Shouldn't the PED and New Mexico government at least wait for data on how the current system is going before changing it all up again?

I implore you to think of the consequences of such moves, and to listen to those of us actively in the field, before you come to any decisions. These changes would further constrict our already-strained schedules, resulting in greater burnout, decreased teacher retention, and a lower quality education for our students.

To give a specific example, Los Alamos Public Schools elementary teachers have Wednesday afternoons off. This valuable time is dedicated to department meetings, parent/teacher conferences, and planning for the week ahead. The proposed changes would take this time away from teachers. With what time are they to compile curriculum for our young students, or to meet with parents about their child's progress or accommodations? The conference periods teachers are provided are too little time as it is, but that's another discussion entirely.

Again, as a teacher: please do not rush into these changes. The least that you could do is wait a year or two on the already-recently changed schedule and see how data stacks against whatever conclusions you had that led you to this decision.

Thank you for your time.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Cristine Faseler
German Teacher, Los Alamos High School

From: [Annabelle Castro](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 5:33:08 PM

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I believe the kids should only go 4 days

From: [Kendalen Hendrix](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Longer School Year
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 5:51:24 PM

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I am a parent of a student in the Artesia Public School system specifically a student at zia. My kid was informed today that New Mexico's government was implying a longer school year, which we think is unfair for students and staff in the school system. Me as a parent, we have things to do most of next week we have to travel for hours, this would mean now instead of just going on this trip normally my kid would have to miss out on school which is ironic because the whole reason this making the school year longer is because kids are missing out on too much school. In the case of the staff specifically the teachers they would have to teach longer and not even get paid for it, they don't get paid enough anyways this rule is just making it worse, not paying them for their work they do. This isn't going to help with the attendance, just putting more school days in the school year won't do anything, the students would just miss those days too. The summer is already short with the two months that the schools give them this rule would make it even shorter which is unfair, the kids need time to be kids instead of being couped up in classrooms all day. In my argument I am basically trying to say that making the school year longer isn't fair for anyone. I would just want you to consider not implementing this rule even though this most likely won't even be read it's the thought that counts.

Sincerely Johnna

From: [Joseph O. Cameron](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please remove the amendments to House Rule 130
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 6:25:13 PM

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

To Whom it concerns:

The changes to House Bill 130 are not in the best interest of our public education system. I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to withdraw these proposed changes, or at a minimum remove amendments 6.10.5.8 C.1-3 and 6.10.5.8 H so that this proposal conforms to state law, as established by House Bill 130.

Thank you,

Joseph Cameron

joseph.cameron@taosschools.org

Phone: 575-770-9783

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From: [Shayna Dew](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback 6.10.5NMAC
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 6:28:33 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: [Gina Griego](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 6:44:04 PM

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

Please keep the four day weeks! The kids love it! The at home life's are better. The kids grades are better.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tony Fuentes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school week for Loving NM
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 6:52:37 PM

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

Hello,

My name is Tony Fuentes. My girls have attended Loving elementary their entire school careers. Since the beginning they have been on a four day school week.

I would like to share my displeasure with this proposal to extend their school week to five days for more time in the classroom. I do not believe that more time in the classroom necessarily means more learning. My girls have a high energy and curiosity that can be dulled by too much time in the classroom. Both my daughters have excelled in the four day school week.

I believe the three day weekend gives them time to refresh and come back eager to learn. When they were doing the five day school week in August, I noticed both of my daughters unwillingness to get motivated for school.

As soon as we went back to Monday to Thursday, both of their attitudes immediately improved.

I implore you to please let Loving schools stay on a four day school week.

Thank you,

Tony Fuentes

From: [Vanessa Gonzalez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed Rule NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 7:07:58 PM

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Hello,

I am writing in regards to proposed Rule NMAC 6.10.5. I understand that the PED wants to add school days to the district calendar, however I do not believe that this is the answer to the ongoing issues in education. Since the lockdown in 2020, there has been a drop in enrollment among schools. This impact has come from declining birth rates, housing affordability, and parents' choice to homeschool or send students to other schools. This final reason may partly be due to parents' disappointment with the public education system. Poor student behavior has escalated since the pandemic and there do not seem to be consequences that change this behavior. Other students feel unsafe and teachers are frustrated with the lack of support from administration in many cases. The amount of testing that students undergo each year is outrageous and puts them under unnecessary stress. There is a disconnect between the district pushing SEL days this school year and addressing "the whole child," yet requiring so much testing from students at a young age. Students are exhausted and checked out. School is irrelevant to many of them. Keeping them in school longer is not going to change this attitude or increase learning or test scores. In addition to this, many of them are coming from poverty and unstable homes and neglect and are essentially being "raised" at school. There are deeper issues within the education system that need to be addressed and school, curriculum and learning needs to be more relevant for students to improve. Adding more school days only puts a bandaid on a problem that continues to be ignored. I am in opposition of the proposed rule to extend school days. Thank you for considering my case.

Vanessa Gonzalez

From: [Kristin Evans](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Rule 6.10.5 - Proposal for a 5-Day School Week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:02:15 PM

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Dear NM Public Education Department, I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Rule 6.10.5, which proposes a shift to a 5-day school week. While I understand the need for efficiency, I believe this change will have several adverse effects on our education system. Firstly, the anticipated budget cuts associated with this proposal raise concerns about the potential decrease in funding for extracurricular activities. These programs play a crucial role in fostering well-rounded students and enhancing their overall educational experience. Furthermore, a 5-day school week could negatively impact education itself, potentially leading to a decrease in student performance and staff morale. The additional workload and compressed schedule may compromise the quality of teaching and learning. Additionally, imposing extra costs on parents for transporting their children to and from school poses a significant burden, especially for those already facing tight budgets. This could limit access to education for some students and create financial hardships for families. Lastly, not all parents have easy access to school buses, and the proposal doesn't adequately address the challenges faced by those who choose to transport their children to other schools. This lack of flexibility could limit parental choice and disrupt established routines. I urge you to reconsider Rule 6.10.5 and take into account the potential consequences it may have on our students, staff, and their families. Collaborative discussions and alternative solutions should be explored to ensure a balanced and effective educational environment. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Sincerely, Kristin Evans

From: [Diana Pick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Rule 6.10.5 - Five-Day School Week Proposal
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:06:37 PM

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Dear [Recipient's Name], I trust this email finds you well. I am writing to express my concerns and opposition to Rule 6.10.5, which proposes the implementation of a mandatory five-day school week within our district. While I understand the importance of maximizing instructional time, I believe that a rigid five-day schedule might overlook the diverse needs and circumstances of students and their families. Many families rely on the current flexibility offered by a four-day school week to accommodate extracurricular activities, family responsibilities, and various other commitments. Additionally, studies have shown that a shorter school week can lead to improved student focus and productivity during the days they are in school. This flexibility allows for a more balanced and effective learning environment. I urge the public education department to consider alternative approaches that prioritize both instructional time and the unique needs of our students and their families. It is crucial that any changes made to the current school week structure are thoroughly assessed for their potential impact on the well-being and academic success of our students. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I hope that, together, we can work towards a solution that best serves the interests of our community and ensures the success of our students. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] [Your Address] [City, State, ZIP Code] [Email Address] [Phone Number]

From: [william evans](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns Regarding Proposed Rule 6.10.5 for Five-Day School Week
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:09:15 PM

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

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my reservations and opposition to the proposed Rule 6.10.5, advocating for the implementation of a mandatory five-day school week within our district. While I appreciate the intention to enhance educational outcomes, I believe that a shift to a five-day school week might inadvertently overlook the potential benefits of the current four-day structure. The existing schedule allows for a more concentrated and focused learning environment, potentially fostering increased efficiency in student engagement and academic performance. Moreover, a four-day week provides valuable flexibility for families to manage various commitments and extracurricular activities. This flexibility is particularly essential in today's dynamic and demanding environment, where families often juggle work, education, and other responsibilities. Before making a significant change to the school week structure, I urge the department to thoroughly evaluate the potential consequences and gather input from stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and students. It is essential to ensure that any alterations align with the diverse needs of our community and promote the overall well-being of our students. I appreciate your attention to this matter and trust that the public education department will consider the broader implications of Rule 6.10.5. Thank you for your dedication to the betterment of our educational system.

From: [Judy Elkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:25:17 PM

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Dear Secretary of the PED,

I am writing to you to oppose the proposed Repeal and Replace Rule Change 6.10.5. I do not agree with any of the new proposed rules in regards to the lengthening of the school year. I do not believe that wearing our teachers out any more than they already are, or requiring our students to sit inside the classroom for longer periods of time, will cure NM of any of the problems that we are having with our current public school system.

I especially want to express my extreme opposition to the amendment to 6.10.5.8, section C. As a parent to three children that attend a rural school with a four-day school week, I can tell you that making four-day schools go to five will only greatly hurt the students and the teachers. The students at our school consistently test well above their grade level and have some of the best test results in the state. To force them to go to school more, will only deprive them of the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular activities. Everyone in our area has to travel at least an hour to give our children the chance to participate in sports, fairs, and other school activities. When they are already excelling academically, why should we punish them by taking away any opportunities to participate in anything they enjoy?

Also, I know for a fact that it will negatively affect the student enrollment in these schools. In speaking to other parents, I have heard expressions of doubt as to whether they would send their kids to public school any longer were this change to take place. On top of that, I think that PED may very likely find themselves short of teachers in these schools as well. Teachers that have the option to retire have expressed a very high likelihood that they would choose retirement over a five-day school week. How does shrinking enrollment and staffing shortages increase education for NM children?

I will be the first to admit that we have an education problem, and I wish that I had concrete solutions for that, but I believe that curriculum development and learning incentives would be a much better place to start than merely making our students and teachers more miserable with higher workloads and longer days.

Thank you for your consideration,

Judith Elkins

2judith.rebecca@gmail.com

575-703-0061

791 Cuevo Canyon

Pinon, NM 88344

From: [Manel Martínez-Ramón](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:44:39 PM

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Dear PED officers:

This rule does not make any sense to me. The requirement is not supported by any evidence that this change will translate in any improvement in the teaching quality or any solution to the actual problems of our students and the NM education in general.

So far, I only heard from legislators void and absurd claims as "I do not understand why this would not be a good thing" or "teachers need to be there for the students". This are only weak arguments to support the rule, which maybe hides other more obscure reasons.

The result of this rule will include teacher's frustration, worsened working conditions, lack of motivation and ultimately, professionals quitting to go find a better paid job elsewhere.

Sincerely yours,

Manel Martinez-Ramon
AFT-AAUP member, local 6662 (UA-UNM) elected officer.

From: [Guadalupe Giner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:10:41 PM

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Me comunico con ustedes con el debido respeto , no estaba enterada de este cambio que quieren realizar pero en lo personal no es de mi agrado yo prefiero que sigan los 4 días a la semana ya estamos adaptados a este ritmo espero tomen en cuenta mi opinión muchas gracias .

From: [Matthew Dondarski](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); [Romero, Andres G.](#)
Cc: jennifer.jones@nmlegis.gov; crystal.diamond@nmlegis.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Changes to 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 9:32:32 PM

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

Dr. Arsenio Romero:

As the father of three young boys residing in rural New Mexico, I am very concerned about the proposed changes to the instructional time requirements. My two oldest children (Adam and Vlad) are enrolled in Animas Public Schools while my youngest child (Levi) attends Head Start in Lordsburg. The older children commute approximately 75 miles each school day. Both boys are on the spectrum and we feel that adding days to the school year would be detrimental to their education, ability to receive needed services outside of town and to their general well being for the following reasons:

1. The Animas Public School District has indicated that this change would most likely force the district to go to a 5-day school week. My middle child must attend many appointments at Phoenix Children's Hospital due to his autism. Unfortunately, when you reside in a rural area like this, the nearest services are an 8-hour commute. With the current 4- day week, he has been able to travel after school on Thursdays, get to his appointments/services on Fridays and come back on Friday evening or Saturday. With these services being offered Monday through Friday, he would have to miss a significant amount of school with a five-day school week. His brother has "aged-out" of Phoenix Children's Hospital so we will have to visit another location for his services. Both children will have to miss school for both their own and their brother's appointments.
2. Please consider the socioeconomic impact on these rural families. Many individuals who send their children from Lordsburg to the Animas Public Schools are of limited means but they make it work because they care for their kids and believe it is what is best for them. Adding an additional 150 miles every week to a parents vehicle and fuel bill may be difficult for the less fortunate. Additionally, many parents in Lordsburg do not view going to Lordsburg Municipal Schools as an option due to their perceived quality of the district. To them, the options are to Homeschool or go to Animas Public Schools. I feel that going to a five-day week may prompt many people to give up the commute and the quality of personnel at the schools may suffer. This may lead to more parents homeschooling their children and therefore, denying these other children the socialization benefits of Public Schools.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to transfer at work to Oroville, Washington. I declined it because my middle son Vlad was finally doing thriving in school. He is receiving the services he needs, is learning and even

made a friend. However, I fear that going to a five-day week will cause him to possibly miss multiple school days due to his medical needs and he will become frustrated when he cannot keep up with the work. I also fear that the district may not be able to maintain the same quality or quantity of personnel for his education.

Please consider these concerns when you make your decision. The parents and students in these rural areas are expecting you to do what is best for us.

Matthew R. Dondarski

520 W. 4th St.

Lordsburg, NM 88045

From: [Sheryl McDonald](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); aftnmaction@gmail.com; [Courtney Jackson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:12:25 PM

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Dear NM PED,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed amendments in the NM instructional time requirements. I strongly disagreed with the changes that were implemented this year. Adding more hours did not increase our student outcomes, they decreased them. You took away the elementary prep time, thereby forcing a bell to bell schedule. This has failed miserably. Teachers are upset that they are again taken advantage of and left with less preptime. By instituting this decision, teachers have become less effective and more frustrated because we do not have time to adequately prepare. Without preparation (we were previously low on hours to prep), we can not plan for meaningful lessons. To plan appropriately, I would need an 8 hour work day. Anything less is asking teachers to work for free, again. I am tired of the constant abuse and being asked to do more every year. We do not need more PD days. I have received the same iredy mandatory training five times. It is a waste of everyone's time and money. We do not need more hours without preparation, resulting in more time for teachers to plan with no time to complete this request.

We need to be paid for 8 hours and work 8 hours. We need school support, not more requirements. We need smaller class sizes. We need more support staff to help each student succeed. We need counselors. We need interventionists. We need secretaries that help and not push more on teachers. We need deans or VP's. We need instructional coaches. We need staff to run, SAT, SIT, and all of the extra committees we have to make time for. We need support, not more time. We need our Macs back. My families are frustrated and ready to head to private school, I am considering quitting and changing professions. As an experienced level 3 teacher, I will not allow this continued abuse. Make our schools better before we lose more students and teachers. Listen to the teachers this time around. If they are not with the PED, they will be against the PED.

From: [eden](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: No school on Fridays in Loving NM
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:48:57 PM

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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 [Mail](#) for Windows

Hello my name is Eden Lozoya. I am a student in Loving Middle School, 6th Grade. I want to give NMPED feedback about no schools on Fridays. I wished that we could keep 4 day weeks Loving in Municipal Schools. Because 4 days weeks improved my grades and also because I had way less pressure and more energy when I came to school on Mondays when I came back from my 3 day weekend. When I used to go to a 5 day school it was the complete opposite. I didn't have good grades sadly. My dream is to become the President of The United States of America and also to go to Stanford. With those 2 goals in my life, I could achieve it with 4 day weeks which make me have good grades. Thank you for listening. Sincerely,

Eden L.

From: [Lilly Diamond](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rules or boomerangs
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:27:14 PM

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When I started 22 years ago - it was 183 days plus 7 hours + lunch.

I've seen plenty of "magic bullets" fail miserably and take our students into a downward spiral. Good leadership will take into account all of the comments. Because we can still go down instead of up.

Length of school year should align with top 5 states in the country. I spent my childhood back and forth between Virginia and NM and there was a notable difference (to an 11 year old).

With the 183 days included teacher development paid for by the district. I learned a lot back in the 2000's that I still find useful. We stopped because there supposedly was no money. Maybe but on going training isn't an option of you want well educated children.

The boomerang effect is also something I've experienced more than once and unless the state thinks public school should be privatized- I would rethink it.

Starting or adding or changing mid year when educators have a rhythm with this new group of humans is like this.

I just skipped a rock across the pond and the ripples have this gorgeous rhythm and sound - you hear a loud buzz- and a speed boat comes ripping through washing all the water and the creatures to the left and right with a major roar- your rhythm and ripples demolished

It affects everyone in a negative manner. We already see push back from the paper and the Union. In my opinion it's best to leave the pond alone until the ripples and the rhythm slowly fade at the end of the year.

There are great ideas. But implementing one year at a time has historically been the way to build a castle. Sweeping and gallant changes have historically done more damage than good.

It really doesn't matter if people retire. When they're done, it's just a matter of which year they decide. People are aging and mass exits are happening.

How do we bring up the level of education, raise scores and graduations and make teaching an attractive career?

These are questions PED must answer not me. But they are some of the questions that should be part of your daily mantra.

Lilly

From: [Lakeisha Sayer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar Requirements Opposition
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:39:02 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a parent of two children that attend school at Eagle Nest Elementary School in the Cimarron School District. I was informed that the legislature is trying to change our school calendar requirements which would require that our school move to a 5 day school week instead of the current 4 day school week. I strongly oppose this new rule.

Both of my children struggle in school and both have IEP's and need one on one instruction for their individual learning. The special education department is amazing at the Eagle Nest Elementary School. If this new rule requires that our school move to a 5 day week, this will greatly affect my children and their education in a very negative way. It will require more budget for the school to be open an extra day each week, and the school's budget is not being increased. So what areas will the school have to cut budget on and whose going to suffer from this budget change? Our children will suffer and be impacted in a negative way, and I suspect special education will be greatly impacted. Teachers will get burnt out more easily due to having to work longer work weeks. Teachers that are close to retiring are going to choose to retire early. Then we will have teacher shortages which we already struggle keeping the good teachers we have because of our rural location. And who will be affected by this? Our children will be affected by this as well as our whole community.

Due to our rural location, I personally have to take a whole day for travel for my children's dental, eye care or specialist visits. General doctor visits require half of a day trip. If the school is on a 5 day school week, my children will have to miss more days of school. I am sure this would be the case for a lot of other families and even teachers as well. As of right now, I am able to schedule almost all my children's medical care visits on Mondays, so my children rarely ever have to miss a day of school.

The last point I want to make is that our community is built around the 4 day school week. Please do not change what works well for our community and our children. Please let our school continue on the 4 day school week. Please do not change things for the sake of our children's education.

Sincerely,
Lakeisha Sayer

From: [Christine Sisneros](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No Room for a 5 day school week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:05:38 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to voice my disagreement with the proposed rule change forcing school to change from thier current 4 day school week to a 5 day school week. The current school week allows medical appointments to be made without missing school time. This three day weekend allows family quality time, time for reconnecting, time for grounding, time for words of affirmation, time for love and attention without the rush and hustle of the every day school/work demands getting in the way. Studies have shown that the 4 day school week promotes better test scores, better learning environments, higher teacher/staff/student morale, and allows students time to engage in extracurricular activities without drowning into the night trying to keep everything on track. Then there's the issue with funding. Our rural schools make it with what little we get for funding and struggle to provide the beat environments for our children. Where will the additional monies needed for the extra school days proposed come from? There will not be an increase in government funding state or federal. So how do you propose schools accommodate the demand for more days with the same funding that barely scrapes them by now? Cut costs. That's always the answer. But what is the cost to the environment and we'll being of our children? Does the proposed increase benefit them at all? Our schools test in the upper echelon of the state. Why fix what's not broken? Stop pushing your agenda o to our children, onto our families, onto our lives as you do not know them or live them. Leave our schools and our children alone.

Regards,

C. Sisneros

Maxwell Municipal School Parent of Enrolled Students

(Also an alumni and the parent of two graduated Maxwell Bears)

From: [Naomi Gonzales](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:59:04 AM

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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!

Powered by Cricket Wireless
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From: [Diana Pick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED proposed rule 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 6:32:01 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 a grandma of a current student at WMPS. I do not feel students should be forced to go to school 5 days a week. These kids are tired and exhausted after 4 days. Between extracurricular activities and homework, these kids come home on Thursday evenings exhausted. WMPS students are currently excelling and just because some schools in the state are behind does not mean our students should have to be punished. I am fully against the proposed rule 6.10.5.

Sincerely,

A concerned Grandma

From: [Chanda Crandall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:23:17 AM

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

12/11/23

To The Secretary of PED:

My name is Chanda Crandall, and I am an administrator in Artesia Public Schools. I am writing in reference to the purposed rule change 6.10.5

OBJECTIVE: This rule establishes criteria for determining the length of a school year and day, instructional hours for students, and professional work hours for teachers; and for establishing a school calendar for the school year.

When reviewing the requirements purposed for the Rule Change, I noticed that the Rule is purposing that schools meet for 180 days plus meet the required instructional hours as defined by the PED. Most of the Rule Change proposal satisfies educational and instructional needs for staff and students.

Below are three objectives for your consideration.

1. School Instructional Days, Students attending 180 days,

OR

2. School Instructional Hours meeting 1140 per school year.
3. Teacher Professional Development of 60 hours.

However, I ask that you keep the extended days as an option for local control. In my opinion, we have a greater need to address the truancy epidemic post covid than to extend the school. The Rule changes to school attendance in 2020 have not improved attendance. Rather it has left the school empty handed on attendance accountability. Please improve the Rules for attendance and truancy to hold consequences. Our students who are attending school 85%- 95% of the instructional time are developing and making gains academically.

Respectfully, I request that School Instructional Days remain a local decision per district discretion. Our community elects officials to protect, provide, and ensure the educational process in our communities and the Artesia School Board is a successful

board who invests in the best interests of it's students and families.

Chanda Crandall
Artesia Junior School Principal

Thank You,
Chanda Crandall
Artesia Junior High School Principal

From: [Vania Meetze](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:26:04 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

Please stop making changes to our school calendar. We are already overwhelmed and our plates are FULL!!!! We have just emerged from a Pandemic which greatly impacted education and the last thing we need is yet again another change!! We are already a profession that is underpaid and overworked yet you continue to find punitive ways to continually take from teachers. We already have a difficult time keeping teachers in our state. If you pass this bill it will detrimentally hurt RURAL SCHOOLS and we will definitely lose teachers. This is NOT what we need! You should be ashamed! We are grateful for those that are voices of reason for teachers, we absolutely appreciate you. I hope your families have a great Christmas.

Vania Meetze
8th Grade Science Teacher
Lincoln Middle School
vania.meetze@rrps.net

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From: [Dennis Roch](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment from Logan Board of Education
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:30:24 AM
Attachments: [Logan Board Comment on 6.10.5.pdf](#)

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

Please see attached.

Dennis J. Roch, Superintendent
Logan Municipal Schools
301 N. 2nd Street, PO Box 67
Logan, NM 88426
575-487-2252 (office)
575-487-9479 (fax)

Board of Education
Laurie Strebeck, Pres.
Toby Willis, Vice Pres.
Kene Terry, Secretary
Tom Humble, Member
Kyle Perez, Member

Logan Municipal Schools

301 North 2nd Street
P.O. Box 67
Logan, NM 88426
Phone: 575-487-2252 Fax: 575-487-9479

School Administration
Dennis Roch, Superintendent
Crystal Burns, Principal
Nikki Ward, Business Mgr.
Billy Burns, Athletic Coord.
Rochelle Roch, Counselor

December 11, 2023

Logan Board of Education Input on Draft Regulation 6.10.5

Transmitted via email to: Rule.Feedback@ped.nm.gov

We, the elected board of education for the Logan Municipal Schools, strongly oppose the adoption of the proposed revisions to Regulation 6.10.5 in the NM Administrative Code.

Despite state law in 22-2-8.1 NMSA 1978 granting local school districts the flexibility to design their own calendars (so long as they meet the minimum requirement of 1140 instructional hours), this draft regulation is now proposing rule changes that would **disregard the local authority granted by statute** and would require all schools in the state to schedule a minimum of 180 instructional days per year. This proposal also clearly contradicts Public School Finance Act provisions in 22-8-23.14 NMSA 1978 which specifically authorizes schools to operate on either 4-day or 5-day school weeks, rendering this proposed regulation as illegal and out of alignment with state statute.

Even if the proposal were legal, the policy itself is ill-informed. Requiring all schools to comply with a uniform calendar rule suggests a "one size fits all" approach and fails to account for the diversity of the various school districts in our state, both demographically and academically.

Specifically, such a requirement intentionally ignores the exemplary performance of many schools traditionally operating on a 4-day week. Logan High School boasts a **97.3% four-year graduation rate**, for example, which we proudly accomplish on a calendar of 147 instructional days (at 7.75 hours per day). Not only is it insulting to suggest that our graduation rate is in need of drastic improvement, but it is also highly unlikely that increasing our calendar by 33 instructional days would somehow improve our graduation rate to 100%. On the contrary, we predict that such an egregious requirement would reduce our rate, as students and families would flee the burdensome requirement in search of common sense!

With the statewide average in four-year graduation rate at only 76%, we find it unconscionable that Logan HS would be required to arbitrarily add 33 days to our instructional calendar. Until the statewide rate reaches our local rate, we believe the state should resist placing additional requirements on our locally developed and approved instructional calendar.

Academic achievement should also be an important factor in this discussion. According to NM Vistas data, student reading proficiency NM schools on 4-day weeks consistently outpaces that of NM schools on 5-day weeks. Logan Elementary School boasts a 79% reading proficiency rate, more than double the state average of 38%. Likewise, Logan Elementary School boasts a 61% mathematics proficiency rate, again more than 2½ times the state average of 24%.

Furthermore, the proposed rule would require that this time be “exclusive of teacher professional work hours,” meaning that staff training would have to be in addition to the 180 school days. Once again, this facet of the proposed revisions directly contradicts 22-2-8.1, Section C of which specifically states:

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.*

As employee contracts lengthen to accommodate the new requirements, there will be a strong temptation to trade off professional learning days with new instructional days. Exempting professional development in this way from the required instructional days would likely lead to a reduction in the number of professional days included in the contracts of school personnel, threatening schools’ ability to engage teachers in the critical tasks of data analysis, collaborative planning, and the implementation of emerging instructional technology.

For all of the reasons stated above, we urge the department to abandon these proposed revisions and reaffirm each district’s authority to establish its own instructional calendar in alignment with the law and with its own community priorities.

Respectfully submitted,


Laurie Strebeck, Board President

Toby Willis, Board Vice President

Kene Terry, Board Secretary

Tom Humble, Board Member

Kyle Perez, Board Member



December 12, 2023

Topic: Support for NMPED Proposed Rule 6.10.5 NMAC

Dear Secretary Dr. Romero,

Our student learning data requires that we adjust our priorities and actions with a sense of urgency. We can no longer allow for good intentions and best efforts to rule implementation of various systems at the state and local levels. Over the past several years New Mexico has invested more money into education than ever before, however, rather than seeing student growth across the state, our data indicates that our systems are still failing our students.

This proposed rule is focused on students and the idea of giving students access to more instructional time. While some districts have increased instructional time, some students do not have the same access. It is important that as a state, we ensure all students have access to equitable quality instruction. This does not necessarily mean the same requirements for all districts, but districts that are not demonstrating continuous improvement must be required to do more for students.

Teach Plus New Mexico supports the proposed rule, but acknowledges the need for an amendment. Districts and charter schools, including those currently utilizing a 4-day calendar week, should have the flexibility to develop their own calendars outside of the mandatory days outlined in this proposed rule if they meet requirements for student growth goals as identified by the NMPED. In addition, if a school receives a waiver, they should be eligible for K-12 Plus programming and funding. Below are examples:

- The top 33 percent of districts will have the flexibility to develop their own calendars for the year following this identifying mark OR
- Schools designated as “School of Excellence” or “Spotlight School” OR
- If a school falls below the 25th percentile, then the district no longer has the flexibility to choose a shorter school calendar until they grow above that percentile.

Lastly, we would like to applaud the Secretary and his team for taking action that is focused on New Mexico students and their success in school and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

Hope Morales
Executive Director

From: [Melissa Kanak](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:35:50 AM

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You really need to pull back the reins on this one.

Teachers are already feeling overwhelmed with their jobs. So many are talking about early retirement/job change.

We have so much going on in the schools right now. We are trying to get behavior and attendance under control. You cannot put another thing on our plate.

Please listen to the feedback you will be receiving and reconsider this proposal.

Melissa B. Kanak
ISS Coordinator/EA
Lincoln Middle School

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From: [Sarah Dziewczynski](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130 Comment
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:45:07 AM

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I feel I must speak out about the proposed changes to HB 130 that would mandate schools to have a five-day school week. This move by NM PED is wrong on so many levels. My comments and feelings are informed by my experiences in education. I worked as a public-school teacher for more than a decade in rural Alaska and New Mexico and was a Level 3 Certified teacher in New Mexico with a master's degree in education when she left the profession. I currently serve on the Governing Council of the Taos Integrated School of the Arts.

One, a sweeping mandate of this nature divests Directors, Superintendents, and families of the ability to determine what is best for their community's needs. Any educator knows that education is not one size fits all. Just as each student is unique, has their own needs, strengths and challenges so do schools and districts. Rural students may have farther distances to travel to get to school – imagine having to spend another 2 hours on the bus each week. Schools, such as my students, may be able to offer aftercare to families – a much needed service – because they have the autonomy to structure school hours and days around what their community needs. NM PED needs to trust that administrators and teachers to do what is best for their students' academic success and overall well-being and not micromanage.

Two, dictating a 5-day school week amid a teacher shortage that is approaching crisis status, seems unwise. There literally are not enough teachers nationwide and in our state. A 4-day work week, even if hours are longer than a standard school day can be quite appealing to teachers – providing the ability to do appointments, have much needed mental health time, and giving an additional day in the “weekend” to prepare for class, grade/review assessments and all the other things teachers do outside of their paid hours. No teacher I have ever known can do everything necessary within the confines of their workday. If New Mexico truly wants to take measures to improve the academic achievement of students, the number one priority should be encapsulating trainings into work hours, require and fund increases to educator pay and raise the yearly pay increase to more than the current minimum requirement of \$1. In addition, pathways to teacher certification should be cultivated, benefits improved, assistance with housing and recruitment incentives offered.

Lastly, the proposed change to require a 5-day school week is fundamentally flawed in that it does nothing to address the very roots of why New Mexico students are not performing to their full potential. The top-down approach to “fixing” education – mandating whatever whim can be validated by a study or new trend that is out there, removing Superintendents and School Board members when a school/district doesn't perform to proficiency does not get to the root. A tree doesn't grow by dumping water on it's leaves. You have to water, feed, support and nurture the roots. New Mexico legislators, Governor and PED need to work from the bottom up. Rather than lay on another day of school it is far more important to put energies toward ensuring that all students, and their families, have what they need – food, shelter, safe neighborhoods, healthcare, and childcare as well as work and educational opportunities for parents. I commend New Mexico for implementing a program that provides breakfast and lunch to all students. Programs like this are what are needed to bring students

closer to their academic potential, not another school day.

In conclusion – while well intentioned – the move to mandate a 5-day school week for all New Mexico schools is shortsighted. There are just too many variables that schools and districts have to say definitively that this is the right thing for every student. Communities and districts are far better equipped to determine the needs of their students. Mandating a 5-day school week may be detrimental to retaining and recruiting teachers, which is a very serious concern in these times. Adding one more day to the school week may create additional financial, emotional, and overall physical distress for students and their families – increased time and costs getting to and from school, less time with family, less time for hobbies and sleep. For all these reasons, I implore New Mexico Legislators to reject the 5-day school week mandate in HB 130. Honor educational professionals and trust them to make the best decision for their districts, schools, and students.

Sincerely, Sarah Dzieweczynski

From: rcprigmore@gmail.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule proposal 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:47:54 AM

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Me and my family are absolutely against rule proposed 6.10.5. We feel that all student thrive in the current setting we enjoy having more time with our children on the weekend. The 4 day school week is one of the reasons we chose capitan schools. It's obvious that the children do better in school on every level. To change this at any time will only result in failure of the children. So please do not pass this dumb change.

Thank you,
Prigmore family

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Megan Josh](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School week change
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:55:10 AM

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This is regarding the 6.10.5. I for one disagree with changing their school week to 5 days. My daughter has shown much improvement with Learning while attending this school and going only 4 days a week. When attended school 5 days a week, it was a struggle to get her up in the morning and wanting to go to school. Now she loves school and has enough time on the weekend to enjoy a break from school. Please don't change the school week to 5 days a week .

Sent from my iPhone

From: bmrijrin@gmail.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:57:29 AM

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I have recently been informed that on Dec 18, 2023 the New Mexico Public Education Depart will be hosting a hearing that pertains to several rule changes that will adjust the school calendars statewide and impact accreditation. This calendar rule change ignores the state statute (22-13-1) voted on by our elected representatives, as well as administrative code (6.10.5) by changing the required instructional time from hours (1140) to now days (180).

This new rule would directly impact the schools my children attend at Loving Municipal Schools. They have had a 4 day school week in this school district for almost 10 years. Having the calendar this way allows for my family to have more time together. It allows us to make Dr. appointments and plan for days that need to be missed on these Fridays so that they are able to attend Mon-Thurs and not miss their education time and classroom time. Having the schedule like this allows teachers time to plan and do necessary arrangements for the students to have the best learning experience. I would be very opposed to my children having to go 5 days a week or attend school year round just because you are trying to impose these new rules to the school calendars statewide. What works for some doesn't work for others.

This is a decision that should be decided by each school board and left to their authority. Our school board here in Loving have worked out this calendar to allow students to have 4 day school weeks, still meeting the state requirements for mandatory hours, and we also exceed the state average year after year with the student outcomes. Our school uses the money saved from having school four days a week instead of five for additional student programming.

All of us here in Loving are very opposed to this change. I ask you to allow the rules to stay the same and keep it with hours and not days, and allow this authority to stay with the school board. This will directly effect our school district, my children, and my family.

Thank you,
Trisha Rodriguez

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Kiristie Flores](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:58:00 AM

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This is very very unacceptable!

This would be an outrageous circumventing of the law just put in place last year!!

Our profession is not being taken seriously! We are **not being paid well as it stands**. Now you want to remove our professional development and require we do it on our own out of our pockets! This would reduce our pay doublely as we would not being paid for our trainings **PLUS** us paying for the trainings! Unacceptable!!

NM PED is proposing rules that will change HB 130. This bill was passed and signed into law just last year expanding the school year to 1,140 hours. The new PED mandate would force all calendars to include at least 180 instructional days per school year, cutting important features of HB 130 like Parent Teacher Conferences being recognized as instructional time.

Kiristie Flores (she/her)
SCS2 at LB Johnson MS
575-737-8080 Google Voice & Text
Kiristie.flores@aps.edu

From: [Ashley Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] school calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:58:48 AM

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To Whom it may concern:

Our schools cannot afford to add an extra day to the week. We are struggling as it is and now we are hearing that adding one more day to the week will cost our schools \$1.6 Million. Having an extra day off during the week allows the children to have one more day of getting ready for the week. It is a huge mental health reset each week. Not to mention that there has been stories all over the news about how removing that one day can boost health and brain function. Also, doctors appointments, dental appointments and anything else that comes up is taken care of on a Monday. Most holidays require a Monday off. Adding the additional day also requires parents to change the routine and will affect the work schedules. These kids are struggling as it is and adding another day of school is difficult. Also, its not like adding this additional time in school will be spent on real world issues and things that actually matter in life. Adding one more day of school takes away from traditions that may occur on the additional day off.

From: [Tristan Hoover-Britton](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:59:34 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Please do your JOBS and stay in your lane, allow school boards to do as they are governed to do and let LOCAL CONTROL within the school boards do as they have been. PED is treading dangerous waters under Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's guidance and puppeteers of her appointed cabinet. PED does not know the needs of individual school districts especially rural school districts.

STAY IN YOUR LANE AND LET THE SCHOOL BOARDS DO WHAT THEY ARE INTENDED TO DO!!
DON'T OVERSTEP LEGISLATION!!

Listen to the feedback of your constituents, superintendents and school board members, we pay you and we certainly do not pay you to be tyrants!

Tristan Britton
Parent of Silver Consolidated Schools students

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Marin Goza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:05:34 AM

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An addendum to my previous letter:

Teachers in most four-day districts are responsible for multiple preps and clubs, which requires additional planning time provided by Fridays. I personally teach 9th grade Reading, 9th grade Writing, 10th grade English, 11th grade English, 12th grade English, and high school Art. In addition, I am the Peer Helpers Sponsor and on the Equity Council. This is not unusual for teachers in small, rural districts.

Most of us tolerate these multiple demands because we have the time to catch our breath and plan during three-day weekends. If an extra day is added, many rural teachers will likely return to teaching one prep in a larger district.

From: [Ben Harvey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: : 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:08:28 AM

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The purpose of this email is to express my strong opposition to the proposed mandated changes to school calendars, *6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements*, as presented by the Public Education Department. Our school district is a mostly a 5-day district; however, we do have one rural school that operates on a 4-day schedule. This school is critical to the students it serves in supporting their way of life. We stand in agreement and support with our colleagues statewide that this should be a local decision. We have many concerns about the rule change; here are the most important:

- There is no credible data to show that students who attend 4-day districts graduate at a lower rate, are less successful following graduation and/or have fewer opportunities for academic and social-emotional development. When this point was brought up by board members from small districts, PED Secretary Romero inferred that there were waivers available. However, the waivers to which he referred do not consider the success of a district and their students; rather, it's based on extraordinary circumstances which are highly unlikely to occur on a regular basis.
- Many of NM's 4-day districts are the best performing schools in the state.
- The financial strain on districts who must make the adjustment to additional days is significant. While Dr. Romero assured attendees at last week's New Mexico School Boards Association meeting that there were ample financial resources to fund this adjustment in perpetuity, historically this has not been the case.
- Many of the districts that will be impacted by this rule are in communities that support a rural lifestyle with longstanding family business and activities such as rodeo and family-owned farms and ranches that would be compromised if this rule change is mandated. It is a lifestyle that many in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces do not understand. In a time when both culturally relevant opportunities and family engagement & support are encouraged throughout the educational system, it is difficult to find the rationale behind this decision.
- When this recommendation was presented to the LESC a few weeks ago, many of the legislators expressed their concern and questioned its necessity. Knowing that, why is PED deciding to move forward with an initiative through other means... is it to circumvent the democratic process? Take more even more power away from local school boards? This disregard of input from legislators is concerning on many levels.

As has been said before, ***A School District Should Reflect the Community it Represents***. This does not mean that the standards should be lowered... in fact, individual districts are not afraid to be held accountable for ensuring that they have done everything they can to offer every student the opportunity for success. Accountability through clear communication, analysis of longitudinal data and community input and support will result in our students being ready to take the next step in their educational journey. That said, school calendar decisions should be left to the local school board.

We respectfully request that the implementation of *6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements* **NOT** move forward.

Ben Harvey

Father of two students in Artesia High School and member of Artesia Public School Board

From: [William Hawkins](#)
To: [Apodaca, Dawn](#); [Guillen, Joe](#); [Rounds, Stan](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); luis.terrazas@nmlegis.gov; siah.hemphill
Cc: [Ashley Montenegro](#); [Mike McMillan](#); [Patrick Cohn](#); [Eddie Flores](#); [Michelle Diaz](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Resolution by Silver Consolidated School District Board: NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:14:20 AM
Attachments: [Silver Consolidated Schools HB 130 Rule Change Resolution.pdf](#)

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Dear Members of the New Mexico Legislative Members, New Mexico School Board Association, and New Mexico School Superintendents Association,

I am writing to inform you that the Silver Consolidated School District Board has formally passed a resolution in full support of the concerted efforts by the New Mexico Schools Superintendents to address the Public Education Department's proposed changes to the public school calendars.

The resolution passed reflects our district's unwavering commitment to upholding the highest educational standards and ensuring the academic success and well-being of our students. It highlights our concerns regarding the impact of the proposed changes on our community, particularly the potential disruption to the well-established and successful educational structure in place at Cliff Schools, and the overarching threat to local control over educational decisions.

In light of these concerns, we stand united with our fellow districts in requesting that these proposed changes be reconsidered, taking into account the importance of local control over educational practices and the preservation of educational models that have been effective in our districts.

We encourage an open dialogue and seek your support in this matter. Attached to this email, you will find the official resolution document passed by our board. We invite you to review it and welcome your insights and assistance in addressing this significant issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued support of education in New Mexico.

William Hawkins

Silver Consolidated Schools Superintendent

575-956-2000

We should engage one another with *Trust, Respect, Optimism, Intentionality, and with Care.*

*This is **H**appiness...**E**ngagement...**A**lliances...**R**isks...**T**houghts...work!*





Silver Consolidated School District

2810 N. Swan St.
Silver City, NM 88061
silverschools.org
(575)956-2000

Mr. William Hawkins
Superintendent
whawkins@silverschools.org
Lisa Lucero
Administrative Assistant
llucero@silverschools.org

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

Whereas, the Silver Consolidated School District Board of Education 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, particularly our esteemed Cliff Schools;

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 Cliff Schools, which has effectively operated a full-time 4-day per week schedule for many 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;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Silver Consolidated 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.



Silver Consolidated School District

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Mr. William Hawkins
Superintendent
whawkins@silverschools.org
Lisa Lucero
Administrative Assistant
llucero@silverschools.org

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 11th day of December, 2023 by the Silver Consolidated School District Board.

[Signature of Board President]

Ashley Montenegro

[Signature of Board Vice-President]

Michelle Diaz

[Signature of Board Secretary]

Patrick Cohn

[Signature of Board Member]

Mike McMillan

[Signature of Board Member]

Eddie Flores

From: [Shanna Dunlap](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:22:56 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I am a teacher at the Jal Public Schools. I have been an educator for 23 years with 22 of those years served in a district that required students to go to school five days a week. As an educator in Jal, I can tell you first hand that my ELA students are on a higher academic level than students who I have previously taught who attended school five days a week/190 plus days a year. The students in Jal are positive and want to come to school. When they are at school, they work hard and have a passion for learning. The overall environment of the school is positive and relaxed, and I think that has to do with the students not being overwhelmed and having three days to rest. They enjoy their four day school week and work hard when they are at school. Our data shows students are performing well academically, and the majority of our students are in attendance daily. I have not seen any data that proves students who attend school five days a week are higher achievers than those who attend four days a week. The students, parents, and community embrace the four day week and have set their schedules accordingly. It is surprising to me that the New Mexico Department of Education wants to mandate a five day week on small districts, when the majority of the staff at the Department of Education are still working from home. At least our staff and students attend school and make each day count. We don't get the luxury of working from home and placing senseless mandates on others.

Mrs. Dunlap

From: [Julie Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT ATF](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:23:14 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

For the last two years, I have participated in APS' 8 hour Workday Study. My colleagues and I have been trained in the Harvard Business School Case Study Method (developed and presented by Harvard Professor David Moss) which is a type of pedagogy that if implemented correctly engages high school students in learning and helps them to understand the democratic process. This work takes hours of time to develop quality lessons that allow students to access college materials, increase their reading comprehension and improve their critical thinking skills. Teachers need time and support for this work. Merely adding on more days to the school year without any data to support this decision, not only ignores the professional knowledge of educators, but also shows a distrust that educators know what is best for their students. As a long time teacher, nearing the end of my career, I feel that my experience and knowledge is completely ignored. I feel that I should not continue to work in a profession that 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.

Julie Martinez

U.S. History/Special Education Teacher

H106 505-890-0343 Ext 37361

VVHS Together: Reflecting on the past, excelling in the present and planning for the future.

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December 12, 2023,

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Bernice Quiroz, and I am a teacher in the Artesia Public Schools. I am writing to you in reference to the proposed rule change 6.10.5.

OBJECTIVE: This rule establishes criteria for determining the length of a school year and day, instructional hours for students, and professional work hours for teachers; and for establishing a school calendar for the school year.

As I reviewed the requirements for the rule change, I noticed the information is conflicting. It seems to me the requirements require districts to meet the 180 days and the 1140 hours of instruction. More days and more instructional hours will not close the gap within the academics nor fix any attendance issues.

I respectfully recommend leaving the decision of extended instructional hours and days to the local control per school district. Each school district knows what is best for their schools. I also recommend tackling greater matters such as attendance. There are so many students who are absent from school consecutively, and there are no consequences for students nor parents.

Civilly, allow the local ELECTED school officials to make the decision of extended days and hours to suit their schools needs, but please harden the Rules for Attendance and Truancy.

Sincerely,

Bernice Quiroz

From: [Erin Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:25:47 AM

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Good Morning,

I am writing to voice my disapproval and disagreement for the PED's proposed rule change to increase the school calendar instructional day minimum requirement to 180 days. I am both an APS employee and parent of two (soon to be 3 next year) APS students. Increasing school days while taking away even more time for teacher collaboration, professional development, and parent teacher conferences and parent contact time is a scapegoat solution to many layers of complex problems throughout our state that need to be addressed prior to increasing the amount of time our kids are in a classroom. By imposing this rule you are taking the autonomy away from districts to decide, along with their community, the best calendar that most closely meets the needs of their particular students and families. Quality education prevails over quantity and you will continue to drive good educators out of classrooms and out of our state.

Respectfully,

--

Erin Moore, MA, CCC/SLP
SLP Evaluator
Albuquerque Public Schools
Southeast Diagnostic Center
1710 Mesa St. SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106
505-224-8600 ext. 20931

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From: [Hector Barrera](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:29:51 AM

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I am a sophmore at Jal High and I am against the HB130 that will change our four day week back to five days because it gives us time to go to doctors appointments, orthodontist, dentist, and for some of us maybe a job. That extra day give us more time to take care of responsibilities we have outside of school. I work for my grandpa after school everyday. But on that Friday morning, I work all day from 5am to 3pm working cattle. With that being said I think there should be no reason to go back to five day weeks.

From: [Christine DuBois](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO to proposed school day and time changes
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:41:10 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I have been a teacher in New Mexico Public Schools for 10 years. I have very thoroughly enjoyed my time teaching 5th, 6th, and 7th grade. Teaching is my passion and I love the challenges that every new day brings. Part of what makes doing this job sustainable for me is the time off and ample planning time. The Governor's proposed changes will alter both of these aspects of teaching. As a teacher in an elementary school in Los Alamos, I stand to lose my Wednesday afternoon planning, grading, and collaborating time. This time is essential to me and my fellow teachers. These Wednesday afternoons are crucial to creating vital lessons, providing feedback to students, reflecting on my own teaching, and working with my team to serve our most vulnerable students. Adding more instructional days also eats away at one of the biggest incentives to continuing to teach: a break that is long enough to recharge, reset, and be ready to do my best for another school year.

Using the ["No Time to Lose"](#) document (linked here), I have some takeaways that I would like to share.

Here are some of the things the document actually touts as ways to improve educational outcomes:

- Children need to come to school ready to learn. This means we need to invest in early childhood education and give extra support to children and families who are struggling early on.
- We must invest in exceptional teachers. This includes teacher education, compensation, and every student having access to exceptional teachers. Ongoing access to professional development (weekly in some cases), continual learning with other teachers (including observations and traveling to different countries to see great teaching), and ensuring that students are college or career ready are some aspects of exceptional teaching.
- We must also invest in a rigorous, non-stigmatized Career and Technical Education (CTE) model. This model would make it clear to our students and teachers that there are no dead ends in education. Only possibilities!
- Our reforms must be purposeful, clearly planned, and carefully designed. This planning takes time, and none of our systemic issues will be solved by making one change.

This document also discusses three of the world's leading school systems and what they are doing well. On page 21, you can read the highlights for each. In Finland, their number one investment is in exceptional teachers. Becoming a teacher is difficult and highly selective. And the education teachers receive never stops. In Ontario, their number one investment is in the diversity of their student population. They are culturally aware, inclusive, and responsive in the way they educate. In Singapore, their Career and Technical Education students are not seen as second class, but rather as equally important and valued members of a functioning and thriving society. Nothing in this document discussed how many instructional days the schools had, because that was not a factor in their success.

Extra days of instruction without an investment in teacher training is a waste of time. Why not invest this money into CTE training that would benefit everyone? Why not invest this money

in superior early childhood education? Why not invest this money in bolstering exceptional teacher education?

It is upsetting to hear that the Governor is proposing yet another increase to our school days. Where is the science behind this decision? Where is the teacher input? When will we consider the benefits of time away from school when we make these decisions?

I don't want to stop teaching. But it's getting harder and harder to justify a career in education when changes with huge consequences are made by people who aren't in a classroom everyday. Listen to the professionals! We know what we are talking about.

Thank you for reading,
Christine DuBois
6th Grade Teacher
Los Alamos, New Mexico

From: [Rhea Lynn Kaufman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 - NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:41:52 AM

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RE: 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements—

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rule that aims to add more school days to the school calendar. While I understand the importance of ensuring an adequate length of the school year and instructional hours, I believe that local control is necessary in determining the school calendar to best meet the needs of our students and community.

First and foremost, absenteeism is already a significant problem in our district. Adding more school days without addressing the root causes of absenteeism would not effectively improve student outcomes. Additionally, the proposed rule to bring back the "no credit" status would only serve to further disenfranchise students who are already struggling academically, as it does not address the underlying issues contributing to their lack of academic progress.

Furthermore, students need to be held accountable for the existing structure in place before additional days are added to the school calendar. It is essential to ensure that students are making the most of the current instructional time before considering an extension of the school year.

I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to reconsider the proposed rule and to engage in meaningful dialogue with local educational stakeholders to find solutions that address the unique needs of our students and community.

Sincerely,

Rhea Lynn Kaufman
Assistant Principal – Artesia High School

Rhea Lynn Kaufman
Assistant Principal
Artesia High School
575-746-9816

ARTESIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – “SUPERIOR QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

STUDENTS”

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From: [Teresa Montoya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:41:58 AM

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Good Morning, as an educator I have been with the district for 13 years. As an educator we are burnt out from our day to day and to add more stress more training outside the duty day is a complete BURN OUT on us all. We all have families that need us to, how do we keep going if we have no rest time, we need time to get creative with our classrooms and bring joy to the children everyday, they don't want a CRANKY teacher on a daily basis, who wants to be around that. These children deserve better; they don't deserve a BURNT out teacher. If we are constantly going to meetings and professional development days we need the other time to dedicate to our classroom and to our staff to build a great MORAL, if we lose this we will lose teachers. Teachers deal with so much and most of us like I said have families, you are taking this way from us and we cant have any more teachers quitting.

These children need more and they deserve better!!



***LMS Health office website**

"Keep looking up... that's the secret of life" Charlie Brown

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From: [Ramona Zamora](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:56:56 AM

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At my school we already implement a longer school day and a longer school year (TOPS). We have still seen a significant drop in attendance. I do not believe adding more days to the school year is going to improve student outcomes.

In my opinion, if we spent more money on keeping good teachers, EAs, and supporting staff, as well as getting rid of the expensive curriculums, we might improve the state we are in. Enforcing attendance policies that are already in place would be a great start. Also, enforcing school policies and actually suspending violent and disobedient students would also be a start. These are the main concerns we are facing in the classroom.

Spending money on curriculum doesn't do much, if our students are already behind, and we are having to supplement curriculum anyway. The money could be better spent on engaging class sets of manipulatives would be a better decision. We could utilize those tools with any curriculum, and there would be more hands-on and project -based learning happening in the classrooms.

--

Ramona A.L. Zamora
General Educator

Ramona.Zamora@aps.edu

Phone: (505) 836-4911 Xtn: 59238



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From: [Lindsay Samora](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 10:15:24 AM

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Educators do not want another year of changes. I work extremely hard often beyond the duty day already. Please respect us as professionals and don't make a huge change in the middle of the year.

Lindsay Samora

Sent from Lindsay's iPhone

From: [Lindsay Gibb](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 10:29:00 AM

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

Adding school days does NOT equate to higher test scores and productivity. There's no data to support that. Invest in the quality of the educational days we already have!!! This is a huge financial reliability for districts. Which can lead to worse results!

Lindsay Gibb
Artesia Public Schools
Parent And Community Member

From: [Michelle Drake](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 10:38:01 AM

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

I am writing this email in strong opposition to extending the school year to 180 instructional days. I am a school nurse in Artesia. As it is we are short-staffed and do not have enough substitutes to cover our staff absences. It is well known that careers in the field of education are harder today than they have ever been. The amount of paperwork only increases. The workload gets more burdensome all the time. Not to mention student's behaviors. When I was in school back in the 80' and 90's these severe behavior issues were absolutely unheard of, now they are unfortunately all too common.

School nursing has only got harder and more complicated as well. I am currently taking care of students with diabetes that require constant monitoring and intervention for low and high blood sugar. Type I diabetes is a volatile disease, and a low blood sugar can be lethal. I also have another student who is has a tracheal tube and oxygen. Sometimes I am called to that classroom as often as every 20-30 minutes to care for this student. This level of care in a school setting is extremely stressful and time consuming. Never before has a nurse dealt with this level of acuity in the school setting. It's hard to fulfill other obligations as a school nurse such as immunization paperwork, Medicaid billing and attending to all the other students in the school that need nursing services that day. This increased mental and physical workload is exhausting. No one in education wants to not only work harder than they have, but also more days. This will only exacerbate staff burnout and lower morale.

On another note, the state of New Mexico has some of the laxest policies regarding student absences. Does anyone really thinking extending the school year will help? We aren't enforcing student attendance with the school days that are already in place. Students falling behind is much more a home and parental issue than it is a school calendar problem. How about crack down on truancy? Hold parents accountable for not getting their children to school. As it is there are virtually no repercussions for students who have multiple absences. That is a real issue that needs to be addressed in NM. Students cannot learn if they are not in school and education is not a priority in their home.

I think this proposed extension of the school year will only be detrimental to staff and students. Education in NM is already bottom of the barrel and this change will just increase staff shortages and decrease overall job satisfaction in an already very difficult field. Student outcomes will have no improvement as the calendar is not the real issue at all.

Thank you for your time in considering parent and staff feedback regarding this important manner.

Michelle Drake RN

Artesia Public School Nurse

Artesia Intermediate School

Ph: 575-746-2766

Fax: 575-746-4097

mdrake@bulldogs.org

From: [Kathleen Gibson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4-Day School Week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:09:07 AM

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I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal to require all schools in New Mexico to change to a 5-day school week. As the parent of a student who attended Quemado Independent Schools from grade 1 through Grade 12, I am well acquainted with the benefits of a 4-day week for small rural schools.

Schools that are on a 4-day week provide the same instructional time as those on a 5-day week and the 4-day weeks do not decrease graduation rates and learning proficiency. In fact, the opposite is true. Quemado schools have a high graduation rate and high academic proficiency.

For small, rural schools a change to 5-day weeks would result in the students spending more time each week on school buses and would increase costs for the school districts for transportation, utilities and school lunches. It would also mean less instructional time for students because they would be away from classes on Fridays for extra curricular activities and needed medical and dental appointments.

Legislative Law 22-8-23.14 authorizes both 4-day and 5-day weeks. I urge you to allow small, rural schools to have all the benefits that are provided by 4-day school weeks.

Kathleen Gibson
PO Box 683
Fence Lake, NM 87315
(505) 788-2256

From: [Galen Prenevost](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School Calendar
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:13:42 AM

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Good Morning,

I am writing to this forum regarding the proposed PED rule change for yet another extension to the mandated school calendar. Teachers are leaving the field of education for many reasons. The public at large is not interested in substitute teaching. This suggestion to extend the school year will most likely be the last straw for new and experienced teachers alike. The current pressures on teachers cannot be overstated. In order to encourage the retention of current teachers and invite new teachers to the field, I suggest a return to the days when teachers were respected by students, parents and the public at large. The community and businesses can offer discounts to educators and parents can teach their children to respect their teachers and all adults in the school system.

I offer my thoughts in this direction, to save what is left of the pool of teachers willing to continue serving the public. Please do not add any additional days to the school calendar.

Respectfully Submitted,

Galen Prenevost

From: [Rhiannon Levin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:28:25 AM

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Good Day,

I am emailing about HB130. This Bill would adversely affect students, teachers, and school districts all over the state. The PED is placing blame for low test scores and low attendance on schools that have shortened weeks, that is not fair. In reality, the schools with shortened weeks outperform and outpace the 5 days a week schools, in testing, attendance, happiness, teacher retention, and school morale.

PED needs to stop looking at the large districts and basing their ideas and rules off of the large districts and look at every district, if that was done the PED would see each district does what is best for its community. Mandating more hours will only hurt our kids and hurt our smaller school districts.

Pros of shortened weeks:

Shortened School weeks have helped student-athletes because they do not miss school as much when they have to travel to away games, long traveling can be done on Fridays without the fear of students missing assignments and class. This is especially helpful when students travel 5-6 hours to play in a district match, or the nearest team is over an hour away.

FFA, Band, and Choir Students and Faculty can have meetings together on Fridays to team build and practice together as a whole group when trying to do it during the week is much more difficult in a small district because students are stretched thin. Faculty also can provide tutoring to students on Fridays as well and can focus on individual student learning and understanding when it may not be possible in the class period.

The cost of busses school maintenance, as well as upkeep (Paying teachers/EAs/ Other staff and paying for meals), will rise exponentially for the school if moved to a five-day week which in the long run cost the state more money.

Students who have come from a 5-day week to a 4-day week report feeling more energized, more ready, and willingly complete school-related things, they also report that work seems easier to complete as well as less complicated to do because they are getting more sleep, and are excited, coming ready to school ready to learn.

Please, I implore you, do not add more hours to the school calendar. Adding time does not benefit anyone and hurts everyone. There is no proven fact that adding hours helps students.

Respectfully,
Rhiannon Levin

From: [Amy Hughes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extending School Year
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:54:57 AM

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To Whom it May Concern,

I am a Level 3 New Mexico educator in my 15th year of teaching. I am against any further action to extend the school year. For one reason, it is proving to have little to no effect on improving educational outcomes. Another reason is that as someone who needs extra income in the summer to make ends meet, this will affect the security of my financial future even more than it already has. Also, it makes more sense to offer enrichment for struggling students over the summer who are identified as having a need. This would offer them intensive individualized instruction.

--

Amy Hughes
Theater Director
Volcano Vista High School
<https://sites.google.com/aps.edu/amyhughes/home>
"Exit, pursued by a bear." – William Shakespeare

From: [debbie fowler](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Protect our 4-day school week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:21:05 PM

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

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Quemado Independent School District, which includes Datil Elementary School and Quemado School, in direct opposition of HB130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023, should it be chosen.

It is abundantly clear, HB130 is an overstep of the NMPED on several grounds. In plain terms, NMSA 1978 Chapter 22, Article 2, Section 8.1 focuses on a minimum mandatory of hours not days. In conjunction, NMSA 1978 Chapter 22, Article 8, Section 23.14 allows 4-day and 5-day school weeks at the discretion of local administration in the best interest of the school children. Therefore, to create a rule that negates the currently existing State Statute 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 week schools than 5-day week schools, again, published by NMPED, in the most recent NM Vistas report.

Likewise, in the face of 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 week schools 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.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Debbie L. Fowler
A concerned grandparent of a Quemado Schools Student

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Bryan Lewis](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Respectful Request for Data to Support Sweeping Universal Changes
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:43:11 PM

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

Good day,

I am writing to respectfully request any data that supports the proposal to mandate all New Mexico school districts to use a 5-day-school-week model. My understanding is that this proposal is being considered to offset and compensate for academic learning losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent quarantine.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

I am well aware of the data that outlines academic losses due to COVID-19. What does current data indicate about levels of academic achievement in 5-day vs. 4-day school-weeks? Is there any data that specifically supports a 5-day school-week model over a 4-day model with respect to general academic achievement? Is there any data that specifically supports a 5-day school-week model over a 4-day model with respect to academic recuperation?

Is there any current data available that tracks educational attainment levels post-K-12 in students that come from 4-day vs. 5-day public school settings? Is there any data available that operationalizes student successes in any way? Is any of that data stratified to differentiate between students that came from a 4-day vs. those that were products of a 5-day academic week?

Is any of that data relevant post-COVID-19? Why or why not?

ATTENDANCE

What does current data indicate about attendance and truancy in districts that require 5-day vs. 4-day school-weeks? Does pre-pandemic data differ from post-pandemic data? Are there any differences in truancy rates in 4-day and 5-day schools?

Has any cross-correlation data been analyzed that might indicate a relationship between attendance and academic achievement? Is there any significant difference in this relationship in students from 5-day model districts as opposed to those from 4-day model districts?

What attendance and truancy projections can be made by looking at existing data? Have these numbers been affected one way or the other for any districts that have made the switch from a 4-day to a 5-day school-week?

FAMILY INPUT

The proposal itself vaguely references "undue hardships" but offers no definition as to what constitutes these hardships nor who will make these determinations and under what criteria these decisions will be made.

Has any survey data been collected from families of students in 5-day and 4-day districts?

What does that data indicate about the familial impact of changing district requirements for

days and times required to attend?

Is there a significant difference in the data representative of rural and urban districts?

(Local) Anecdotal evidence indicates that many families within our district will not be able to send their students to school 5 days every week due to requirements of themselves, their land and labor, or other reasons specific to life in rural-New Mexico. Has the PED considered the impact of this change to rural families tied to a land that is already struggling during these turbulent economic, social, and political times?

EDUCATORS/STAFF INPUT

Has any survey data been collected from teachers and staff of 5-day and 4-day districts regarding the impact of requiring 5-day school-weeks statewide?

(Local) Anecdotal evidence indicates such things as unwillingness to commute to rural districts, retirement, and simply leaving the profession altogether have all surfaced since talks of the mandate have been considered. Is there any data that supports or refutes these anecdotal statements? Has the PED considered the impact of an already lacking educational staff statewide of these data, especially in rural districts? Where will personnel come from should even some of these negative impacts come to fruition?

OTHER SOURCES OF DATA

It is my understanding that at least 36 states in the US currently have districts that utilize a 4-day school-week model. If we do not have data available within our state, what does any available data indicate?

Have any states that previously allowed the 4-day school-week model subsequently mandated a universal 5-day model thereafter? If so, what were the positive impacts that resulted in that state? Were rural statistics and data indicative of that positive trend? What were the negative impacts and fallout of that mandate? How will the New Mexico PED be proactive to minimize those impacts and fallouts?

PREVIOUS REQUIREMENTS

It is also my understanding that the NMPED developed very strict and stringent requirements that each district currently on a 4-day week model had to meet in order to be granted that status. These decisions could not be arbitrarily made, and districts could not simply determine themselves to be a candidate for a 4-day week. Rather, unique qualifying circumstances were presented and the PED made a decision based on the best outlook for specific districts and their distinctive situations. Is there any data that supports negative progress from students from these districts? Has that data been cross-referenced within those districts before and after switching from 5-day to 4-day school-week models?

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Will the PED be able to financially support districts, especially rural districts, to increase their funding to provide for the 20%+ increase to overhead operating costs? Transportation, meals, support staff, facility access and costs, utilities, specialized staff and services, etc. all must be considered in order to provide Free Appropriate Public Education to all students.

Please understand that I am not intrinsically against this proposal. However, as a special

educator, I have been trained, many times by the NMPED directly, not to make emotional, impulsive decisions; rather to consider all sources of available data so as to make appropriate, data-driven decisions supported by evidence. This is especially true of proposals that make sweeping changes that are expected to be universally followed regardless of differences in environments, settings, and circumstances.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

--

Bryan Lewis
PreK-6th Grade Special Education
Hondo Valley Public Schools

From: [Alexis Rel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Change to HB 130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:47:22 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I have recently been made aware of the proposed changes to HB 130.

I am against those changes as they ask more of teacher's who already give too much. As an Instructional Coach who works with teachers around the state I can attest to the fact that teachers are already burnt out. If we increase the hours that are mandated for professional development to be outside of the school day I fear we will lose a great number of good teachers. They already are doing so much beyond the contracted hours to support the needs of their students.

Further, as a parent I feel that students are spending too much unecessary time in school. What they need are flexible learning environments that remive barriers to learning. Not more hours in the classroom.

We need a change in how we evalute student learnin. We also need to provide teachers paid with the time they need to create quality instruction and grow professionally. Right now they increase in pay is just making up for the years where we were underpaid for our efforts.

Please look into Universal Design for Learning and CLRT as you examin how to bridge the educational gap for students in our state. Extending hours for educators or students is not the answer.

Thank you,
Alexis Rel
Rio Rancho, NM 87124

From: carol.newmex@gmail.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:01:54 PM

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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.

I strongly support PED in this effort. New Mexico children need to be in school. Teacher work days, early releases and all the other reasons the local schools find to not have kids in class have gotten totally out-of-hand. I know teachers need time to plan and work. But how many days a month are they doing this? Our kids benefit from in-person, classroom instruction. Make 180 days and 5.5 hour permanent state-wide.

Carol M Holt

Silver City NM

From: [Bahador Mousavi](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment about Rules
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:07:28 PM

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To whom it may concern:

As an educator level 3 with seven years experience of teaching , I believe extending the instructional hours will not improve the quality of education. Currently the NM educational calendar is longer than many states but quality of education is low in many NM districts. I think if the policy makers run research about NM education , they will find many reasons like lack of facilities or lack of experienced educators .

Therefore, I believe the recent proposed laws are not based on accurate research and I am opposed to these laws.

Best,

Bahador Mousavi,

From: [Ami Montoya](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] House Bill 130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:07:48 PM

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

To Whom it May Concern:

Extending the school day/year is not what the state of New Mexico needs to support education. Students are exhausted and teachers are burned out. Administrators are trying to support both the best we can, but ultimately burnout is burnout. When making these decisions, has New Mexico studied other states that are successful such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, California, or anywhere else that has a diverse population including low income?

Students do not need more time in a classroom, they need more opportunities outside of the classroom and that is where the state should be supporting. Families are burnt trying to work long hours in order to pay their bills, are facing homelessness, trying to protect their families from the drug crisis, and increasing long hours for both, only reducing their time together as a family - is a dangerous road to travel. Families should be supported to have opportunities to provide to their children such as sports, activities, arts, and even travel. Families are often bound to work and school schedules to provide these opportunities or threats of Attendance policies if they were to miss school.

Looking within our state - schools that are marked Excellent compared to schools that are marked MRI have a different dynamic in their communities and it is linked back to opportunities as well that the families are able to provide. So instead of asking for more time within the school walls, burning out teachers, students, and admins - what can the state do that's modeled after successful states in order to better support our education system?

Listen to the voices and remember what it's like being in the classrooms. Being in the classrooms today is not the same as it was 20, 10, even 2 years ago. The demands mentally and physically have changed, our children's lifestyles have changed, the way they learn has changed. Meet more faces, shake more hands, do more research within our state and out of our state before making such drastic and frequent changes. Do not add onto our school days any more than you have, there are other ways and as innovative leaders who were selected to lead this state, find those ways....

--

Ami Montoya

Assistant Principal

Mission Ave. Elementary

505 - 344 - 5269 ext. 56773



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From: [Melanie Gutierrez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week change
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:11:52 PM

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PED,

I am writing to express my concern over the new proposed rule change that will no longer allow 4-day school weeks. I am coming with a background as a former student of a 4-day school week, a former teacher of a 4-day school week, a current parent of students attending a 4-day school weeks as well as a 4-H Agent in a county where all but one school is a 4-day school week.

4-Day school weeks in NM began long ago, not sure when, but I started a 4-day week as a student in Roy in 1993. The reasoning behind the 4-day school with longer instructional hours were to help with attendance rates. In these small rural areas, it takes an entire day to drive to dental appointments, doctors' appointments, grocery stores etc. This was causing low attendance rates as student would have to take an entire day from school for these things. Once the 4-day school week was implemented in these areas they saw a significant improvement in school attendance. When you analyze the 4-day schools as a whole they are performing better than 5-day schools. As the PED says more time with teachers can't be a bad thing. Our 4-day school weeks are seeing more teacher time than a 5-day school week with low attendance.

As a former junior high and high school teacher I can tell you that students learned more in my class with a longer instructional period over 4 days than they could have ever learned in a shortened period over 5 days, scores prove that. Students that live in rural areas also tend to be more involved in their schools and communities which means they are involved in extracurricular activities in those 3 days away from school. It has been proven that those students who are more involved in extracurriculars are better students in the classroom. Switching to a 5-day week would cause kids to become less involved in extracurricular activities, because they have less time thus, becoming lower performing students in the classroom.

I can tell you as a mom of current students living in a remote area one day of their weekend is spent going to doctors appointments, getting groceries, attending 4-H and FFA events along with many other things. With a 2-day weekend that leaves little time for students to become rested mentally and physically and be ready for another week of school. I am not alone in many of these 4-day week schools when I tell you my kids leave the house at 6:45 am to be at school on time and then return home most nights around 7:30pm because of extracurricular activities after school. My children are 9 and 13. We do the extracurriculars because they are growing as people and are better in the classroom because of the life skills these extra activities teach them. Kids like this are TIRED by the end of the week. The 3-day weekend allows them to get at least a little rest to come back on Monday prepared.

Now, as the 4-H Agent I also have problems with this new proposed rule....I know you've heard of 4-H as there is one school in Albuquerque that has implemented 4-H into their schools, and they have

seen drastic improvements in behavioral problems as well as test scores. In our rural areas we can offer lots of 4-H programming on Fridays to these students of 4-day schools. There are so many statistics out there about how our positive youth development program benefits kids in so many ways. I know in our county if our schools all had to attend 5 days a week, participation in this great program would drop significantly, as they would be moved to Saturdays. As I already mentioned above these rural students are involved in so many things, they would not have time for our programs. The programs that teach them much needed life skills that are simply not taught in the classroom.

Last year the bill was passed that increased instructional hours and days, to some of the highest in the country in order to increase student achievement. You, the PED, have not even given this new rule imposed last year, time to take affect and see if it works or not. Because of this, it is hard to believe that you are truly looking at statistics or science what-so-ever with this new push of more days and taking away the 4-day week. If you were looking at the statistics, you would be pushing for all schools across the state to implement 4-day school weeks just like other states are currently looking at.

Lastly, I implore you to look at the correlation between child wellbeing and education across the nation. The high positive correlation should prove to not only PED, but our Governor and our law makers that to improve our education we need to be looking at how to improve our child wellbeing.

Don't let our children suffer the consequences, because of political games in Sanat Fe.

Melanie Gutierrez

From: [Rachel Nicolds](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:11:55 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Rachel Richardson and I currently have 3 kids that attend Reserve Independent schools in Reserve NM. I also have two young children who will eventually enter the school system. I am writing to voice my strong protest of the proposed changes to 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements. Currently Reserve schools enjoys a 4 day per week schedule. The proposed change is not supported by evidence, which shows consistently that increased instructional time alone does not guarantee improved student outcomes. Other factors that contribute to improved student outcomes includes student engagement, and robust family and community support. I would like my children to continue to enjoy these benefits. Benefits that would be affected by a longer school calendar. The changes would be exerting authority you do not have and an infringement on our local autonomy. Decisions about our school calendar should remain in the hands of those who know our community best. Giving us the ability to make decisions that best serve our students, parents, community, and educators. I completely disagree with the proposed changes.

Thank you,

Rachel Richardson

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: [Anthony Fischer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC RULE 6.10.5 "SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:15:29 PM

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I am midway through my 22nd year as a teacher at a Title I school in the Albuquerque Public School district. In my opinion, extending the school year to 190 days would have little to no effect on student outcomes. Why?

A. There is no guarantee that more time would result in increased achievement. APS has recently extended the school day to take in a supposed adolescent need for more sleep. Grades have not improved. Work turn-in rates are down. It would appear that the bad habits necessitating this change are not being modified. In fact, they are becoming worse.

B. Those students who are chronically absent are not going to come any more or less if days are added to the school year. They will be absent the same percentage of a school year that they always have been.

These are the two main reasons why I do not support extending the school year. It is doing the same thing in the hopes of achieving a different result.

Anthony M. Fischer

From: [Quinn Hollerbach](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: AFTNMACTION@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] opposition to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:18:03 PM

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Hello,

My name is Quinn and I am an educator in Rio Rancho. I am strongly opposed to the proposed rule changes referenced in the subject line of this email. The new mandates will result in reduced flexibility in the schedules of districts statewide and necessitate the adoption of more rigid schedules which do not suit many of the smaller districts who have seen great success with a 4 day week. Furthermore, the change from number of instructional hours to number of school days will result in an increased workload for all educators, as professional development will have to be included separate from the 180 school day proposal. This will lead to a significant uptick in burnout - and in a field in which this is already a major problem and staffing shortages are ever-present, it seems remarkably myopic to make such a drastic and unnecessary change. In summation, I am wholly in opposition to this proposal, and I will be reevaluating my future as an educator in the state of New Mexico should it pass.

Regards,
Quinn Hollerbach

From: [M.H. 2](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC rule 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:22:06 PM

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Hello,

I am a speech pathologist at Las Cruces Public Schools and have concerns regarding the NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements".

Students and teachers are already struggling and burnt out at the end of every school day due to huge class sizes. It is difficult for students to access what they need and for teachers to individualize lesson plans and interactions with students when classrooms are bursting at the seams. We have seen more students in special education requiring shortened school days due to the already long days and overstimulating nature of large classroom sizes (both in and out of special education)

Any additions to the school schedule will only exacerbate the problem. Forcing students to be in class for longer hours or more school days will only add to their level of overwhelm and overstimulation. We urgently need smaller class sizes to address our academic struggles. Continuing to focus on extended learning time will only add to the problem.

Thank you,
Myelle Harris

From: [Karen Torres](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extended school year
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:39:51 PM

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I have great concerns about extending the school year. Our students need time off to spend time with their families, work part time jobs, and generally learn about life. Particularly here in New Mexico, with our great majority of rural communities, we need to allow students to explore nature and participate in family farming and ranching. As both a high school and community college educator, I do not see the benefit for students in this situation, only detriment. Please do not move forward with this ruling. Thank you for your consideration.
Karen Torres

From: [Lora Armendariz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:51:44 PM

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I have recently become aware of the proposed regulations in 6.10.5 NMAC that would require school districts to switch from a 4-day week to a 5-day week. This change would be devastating to our farming and ranching communities and cultures. Agriculture is an important part of our state's heritage and economy. This has been able to stay a strong part of our lives because families are able to include their children in their life and work. Four-day weeks attribute to the strength of communities. Additionally, our schools tend to perform better academically than urban schools with a five-day week. Therefore the proposed regulations do not make sense if the intention is to strengthen our academic performance.

Please speak up for our communities and schools. We know that you truly care about the interests of the people you represent. This proposed change should not be allowed to pass.

Sincerely,

Lora Armendariz

From: [Lora Armendariz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:51:58 PM

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I have recently become aware of the proposed regulations in 6.10.5 NMAC that would require school districts to switch from a 4-day week to a 5-day week. This change would be devastating to our farming and ranching communities and cultures. Agriculture is an important part of our state's heritage and economy. This has been able to stay a strong part of our lives because families are able to include their children in their life and work. Four-day weeks attribute to the strength of communities. Additionally, our schools tend to perform better academically than urban schools with a five-day week. Therefore the proposed regulations do not make sense if the intention is to strengthen our academic performance.

Please speak up for our communities and schools. We know that you truly care about the interests of the people you represent. This proposed change should not be allowed to pass.

Sincerely,

Lora Armendariz

From: [Lora Armendariz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:52:02 PM

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

I have recently become aware of the proposed regulations in 6.10.5 NMAC that would require school districts to switch from a 4-day week to a 5-day week. This change would be devastating to our farming and ranching communities and cultures. Agriculture is an important part of our state's heritage and economy. This has been able to stay a strong part of our lives because families are able to include their children in their life and work. Four-day weeks attribute to the strength of communities. Additionally, our schools tend to perform better academically than urban schools with a five-day week. Therefore the proposed regulations do not make sense if the intention is to strengthen our academic performance.

Please speak up for our communities and schools. We know that you truly care about the interests of the people you represent. This proposed change should not be allowed to pass.

Sincerely,

Lora Armendariz

From: [Nakia Hagins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Revision
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:53:43 PM

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

I am apposed to the new proposal for instructional time, it has already been increased significantly. We do not need an extended school year or more instructional hours. /

Nakia Hagins

Special Education Teacher

Suicide/bullying prevention coordinator McKinley MS Phone:
(505) 881-9390 ext 43852

Nakia.hagins@aps.edu



From: [Daniel Hicks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:59:30 PM

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I would like to voice my concern against the proposed calendar change.

I work for Socorro Consolidated Schools, we are a 4 day school, since we changed to a 4 day week staff morale has never been better. Our staff looks forward to having Fridays off and are able to do things as a family and go to appointments when needed without taking time off work.

We currently have quite a few staff members that travel here from out of town to work on a 4 day schedule, if we were to go back to a 5 day schedule, we will be losing most of them. Staffing our classrooms and schools with highly effective people is no easy task, the 4 day week gives more options for filling positions.

I personally use Friday's as "catch up days", I used to have to come in on weekends to catch up, but now am grateful to have a quiet friday to get the weeks work finished up.

Please vote against the proposed calendar change.

Thanks for your time!

Thanks
Have A Great Day!
Danny Hicks
Socorro Schools
Transportation Director
(575) 418-5386

From: [Cody Skinner](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regulation 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:03:23 PM

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The PED does not need to change from instructional hours to instructional days. This rule would destroy the 4-days per week schools, and these are the schools who typically score better than the 5-days per week schools. Adding additional days to a district is a huge expense in salaries, utilities, transportation, food services, etc. If Dr. Romero and the PED are concerned about raising our scores, let's focus on **quality, not quantity!** The PED was bragging about some schools whose test scores were amazing. Many of those schools Dr. Romero was bragging about were 4-day per week schools. Why brag about their accomplishments then turn right around and threaten to increase their calendar days because they aren't doing good enough. Many of these rural communities need the 4-day weeks to keep staff and students. Changing to a 5-day week calendar could cause many of these rural schools to lose staff to larger districts who pay higher salaries, and cause many parents to homeschool their children.

Staff Professional Development is crucial for teachers and students, and any additional P.D. would have to be in addition to the 180 instructional days. This again is another unfunded mandate that would cost our schools thousands of dollars that we don't have.

Let our school boards, who have been elected by the community, have local control over our calendar days.

Cody Skinner

Assistant Superintendent

Artesia Public Schools

301 Bulldog Blvd

Artesia, NM 88210

Office: 575-746-3585 ext.1014

Cell: 575-308-3476

Email: cskinner@bulldogs.org

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From: [T. Bonacci](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Longer school year? NOPE!
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:04:33 PM

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

Dear Madams and/or Sirs;

We have not even finished our first year of extra days added to our school year, and already politicians are screaming that "it's not working." Huh, I wonder why?

I have been an educator for more than 20 years, and I grew up in New York, where I had more vacation than I've ever had as a teacher, and I received an EXCELLENT education.

Since I have begun teaching in 2001, I have taught in districts along Colorado's front range, in Colombia, South America, and now in Albuquerque Public Schools.

One thing I can say is that with all of the wrap-around services, top-notch professional development, and caring, professional, and highly qualified teachers, APS is doing ALL the right things. I have only been here three years, and I can say that compared to every other district I have worked for, APS cares immensely for its students and teachers.

That said, ever since I started teaching, student proficiency scores have been going down, on average. (Oh my GOD? Could it be ALL MY FAULT?)

And every year, across Colorado (and even in Colombia!) people think that adding more days is going to somehow magically increase test scores. But they keep going down. Guess the length of the school year doesn't really matter judging by this data.

You know what DOES matter? **Attendance.** More and more, people are home-schooling, or pulling their students from school altogether. And if the parents or guardians aren't involved at all, why should a student even bother showing up?

So, let's look at why our attendance is down: First, the economy may be doing wonderfully for Wall Street, but the price of rent and housing has increased exponentially since the 1970's as people's salaries have stayed more or less the same. Since the recession in 2008, there have been more people experiencing homelessness, more drug abuse with things like Fentanyl, and inflation has effected not just housing but healthcare, car insurance, and food prices. Bring in COVID, and people went mad. Those

of us with supports fared better. Those without came out of the pandemic worse off than when it started.

Every day, I see students who are from broken homes, with one or both parents incarcerated, students who rely on McKinney-Vento subsidized food bags to make it through the day, who have to work long hours on top of going to school to help support their families, who are living in hotels or couch surfing, and who don't have access to laundry facilities.

On top of this, the advent of the Smart Phone has created a mental health crisis amongst our students as they are constantly distracted by who's got more likes on social media, cyber-bullying, body dysmorphia, and over-sexualization, rather than seeing sexually healthy material.

We are facing heightened racism, global warming, and more and more gun-violence. Part of why we can't manage cellphones is because parents will not agree to bar them from their own children in school incase a school shooting should occur. People are scared.

With all of the above, is it any wonder that students have so much emotional baggage on their plates that school may take a back seat? Extra days are not the answer. All this will do is punish those students who do show up to school, and give the kids who don't show up more absences on their records.

What we need is a concerted NATIONAL effort to roll back tax cuts on the uber-rich so that others can live without having to work three jobs. We need Universal health care, day care, and mental health care. And we need salaries to rise to meet inflation so that people can afford rent and mortgages. If we can fix THESE things, then I will GUARANTEE you that our students will achieve. Because it is near impossible to focus on learning when your brain is dealing with PTSD of any kind.

Every teacher I have ever had the honor of working with cares deeply about his or her students. When our students are in the classroom, we can help them to succeed. But we need more support than just a longer school year. Fix the attendance problem caused by the circumstances already stated first, THEN you can talk to me about a longer school year.

As it is, with a Master's degree and my summer vacation having dwindled by more than a month since I started teaching, you will lose me and others who can be paid double with our education, but only stay because of the long break (which most of us spend lesson planning for the next year.)

Please heed my words and stop trying to use bandaids to cover an obvious cancer. Look at the CAUSES of the problems first. It may take longer to fix, but it will not be a waste of money and future generations will thank

you for it.

Sincerely,

Tristen A. Bonacci, MA.Ed.
English, PE, and social studies teacher

*Tristen Bonacci (She/Her), MA.Ed.
Professionally Licensed Secondary English & P.E. Teacher
Member - USA Triathlon; USA and CHSAA Swimming Coach*

Compassion is not a relationship between the wounded and the healed. It's knowing our darkness well enough to sit in the dark with another. - Pema Chodron

From: [Marina D'Amore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:11:34 PM

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

Rural communities in our state are overlooked. The benefits to students attending 4 day school weeks are endless, and proven. We have the data that says our kids are more adapted, well rounded, and capable than students graduating from traditional 5 day schools. This isn't about getting a day off, this is about government overstep, and preventing a ruling that would be devastating to kids on ranches, and reservations. As well as teachers who also travel tremendous distances to provide quality education to NM's "little schools".

12/12/23

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Monica Simer, a 25-year-veteran teacher for Artesia Public Schools, and I am writing in reference to the proposed rule change 6.10.5.

This rule change to add additional days to a school year (thus taking local control out) should not be considered for the following reasons:

1. Basing school days on hours, rather than days, is a more concise measurement and should be the continued requirement for all schools in the state of NM
2. Schools that meet the required hours and only go four days a week have the best test scores in the state and this four day week is what works best for their town and community
3. Schools' budgets are already spread too thin – we can't afford to add additional days, especially without additional funding
4. Our community (which are the stakeholders for the schools) voted and we are completely against the Extended Learning Time additional days
5. Local control needs to stay with school boards who represent the community's voice in public education. School boards provide citizen governance based on the knowledge of the community's needs and resources and are the community's watchdog, ensuring that taxpayers (the school's stakeholders) get the most for their tax dollars. These are the people who make knowledgeable decisions based on what's best for their community.

As a seasoned educator, the problem schools are facing is attendance by students on a regular basis and adding days to the current requirement will do nothing to improve this situation; in fact, it will most likely make it worse. There are no longer consequences for habitual absenteeism and students are well aware of this fact; talk about lost instructional time. Students who are chronically absent from school not only miss the direct instruction on the days missed, but also subsequently harm the students who are doing the right thing by attending school on a regular basis by taking the teacher's attention from the learning objective and placing it on catching the absent student up. Instead of adding more days to the current calendar, combat the systemic problem of attendance by giving schools the power to fight chronic absenteeism with real consequences – this is where real progress can be made in the learning process.

I respectfully implore you to keep school instructional days a local decision and to keep the current instructional hour requirement.

Monica Simer
Teacher – Artesia Public Schools

From: [Britny Powell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No Thank you
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:29:57 PM

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

Attached is a letter from my thirteen year old sons school district. I wholeheartedly agree with this letter and would like my opposition to the proposed education changes noted.

Thank you.

Sincerely Concerned Parent,

Britny Powell



[6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule, Letter of Opposition_copy.pdf](#)



Texico Municipal Schools

Home of the
Wolverines

Robert Brown
Superintendent
PO Box 237
520 N. Griffin
Texico, NM 88135
rbrown@texicoschools.com

Telephone (575) 482-3801
Fax (575) 482-3650

December 11, 2023

Dr. Arsenio Romero,

This letter is in reference to and is written with a negative vote for the PED's "6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule". This rule is in direct conflict of multiple state statutes and Public School Code (22-2-8.1) and the Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14). The fact that this proposed rule change is in conflict with the above mentioned statutes, it is illegal for the PED to propose such a rule.

Public School Code, Section 22-2-8.1 speaks specifically of "professional work hours" being included in or may be utilized as a portion of the instructional hours. The proposed regulation requires that the proposed number of days be "exclusive of teacher professional work hours". This would mean that PD be in addition to the 180 calendar days. Also, in regard to this code, it only speaks of a minimum number of instructional hours, not a minimum number of days.

Public School Finance Act, Section 22-8-23.14 authorizes schools or school districts to operate on either a 4-day or 5-day school week. The PED's regulations or rules cannot be in direct conflict with state statute.

Texico Municipal Schools prides itself on the academic success that our students have earned or achieved. Our elementary and middle school are "Schools of Excellence", and our high school is recognized as a "Spotlight School". We have two schools, our high school and middle school, that have recently been recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. Specifically, for "closing the achievement gap". Our expectations are second to none and we have developed the appropriate relationships with this community where our parents support our high expectations, and they assist us in holding students accountable for their success. We are and have been recognized as the number 1 rated school district in the state of New Mexico by Niche, an independent organization that compares schools across each state and the country. All of the success that we have is achieved on a hybrid 4-day week calendar. We have class/instruction for 1246.94 hours, which is well above most 5-day week schools. We have and will continue to work hard to ensure our students success.

The proposed rule will be detrimental to the education of children across our state in many ways. The bulleted points below are just a few of the ways this proposed rule change would be negative for our school district.

- There are 700+ vacancies across the state and we had 4 teachers in our elementary school stated yesterday that they would retire or find something else to do rather than work the additional days. I can only imagine how that number will increase across the state, especially in larger districts.
- Instructional strategies would change, especially at the secondary level, class length would decline. We currently have approximately 55 minutes per class period at our secondary schools which allows for

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teaching of new material, guided/independent practice, assessment, and re-teaching within a class period. With a shorter day, class sizes/length would be reduced to approximately 40 minutes, which would not allow for the above mentioned sequencing of teaching & learning.

- Attendance rates across the state are abysmal and adding another day of instruction would only make it worse. We encourage parents to schedule appointments on Fridays, schedule as many school events as possible on Fridays, therefore not interrupting instruction by having students who participate in co-curricular, extra-curricular activities absent from instruction on Friday.
- Facility and transportation costs would increase by approximately 20%.
- Teacher contracts would have to be extended beyond the 180 days of instruction to account for professional development that will be excluded from the instructional time. We simply do not have the funds to increase salaries.
- Teacher and staff daily rates of pay would decrease. Therefore, devaluing their profession. This is definitely a negative, especially when it is very difficult to fill the positions across the state that are unfilled at this time. It will only get worse if this rule becomes reality.

There has already been one lawsuit filed against PED in regard to “over-reach” and districts losing “local control” and I am sure there will be additional if this proposed rule becomes reality. Texico Municipal Schools will certainly take part in such a suit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Brown", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Brown
Superintendent of Schools
Texico Municipal Schools

From: [Tracie Bethea](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:33:52 PM

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I have 2 students currently enrolled in Quemado schools. We are a very rural area where the school is over 55 minutes from our house.

I already drive my children 100miles a day back and forth to the BUS STOP where they have to ride another 30-40 minutes on bus to school. We wake up at 5 am in the morning to do this. My children do not get home until after 5 PM. Only having to do this 4 days a week is a GOD SEND for our family. We would not be able to afford another 100 miles a week to our gas bills and car maintenance. The Friday we have off also makes it to where we can do things like go to doctors during normal business hours (also hours away) without the children having to miss school. It allows the kids to rest and recouperate from the long 4 days we have so that they are ready to do it again in the next week. Catron County doesn't need more school days, they need more school options to accommodate those of us who live so far away and spread out.

There are 5 votes in my house hold that we stay at 4 days a week.

From: [Adam Gutierrez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:36:41 PM

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

Dear NMPED,

I stand with other NM educators and educational professionals who are vehemently opposed to the proposed amendments to the School Calendar Requirements. We need to be working towards a flexible educational system that allows districts to make decisions that work for their community. This constant focus on the number of instructional hours obfuscates the public attention away from the structural issues that are contributing to chronic absenteeism and abismal graduation rates. For instance, as more instructional hours are being added to schedules, students will continue to be absent due to socio-economic aspects that are entirely out of control of schools and school districts. Our education system is crumbling and the metrics used to evaluate its effectiveness are either outdated and/or broken; changing the schedule AGAIN only exacerbates this.

Professionals in education are begging NMPED and our respective districts to SLOW DOWN and recognize that rushed, top down decision making is failing our students. One of the most egregious examples of how this proposed change fails New Mexican students regards the school districts who have implemented a four day week. 150 days of quality instruction are just as valuable as 180 days, full stop. Further, when districts give students a day *off*, students and their families are able to use that time to focus on equally important obligations (such as scheduling doctor's appointments) that often contribute to students missing instructional time. Don't we want to live in a society that prioritizes our community's health? A four day work/school week is literally working towards a healthier society and NMPED should be ashamed that they are getting in the way of that.

Finally, as the AFT Union points out, the scheduling of in-person rule-making hearings during the school day disenfranchises thousands of educators from having a say in the governance of their profession and their ability to best serve their students. It is ironic that the schedule that we are beholden to is keeping us from participating in the decision making process that affects OUR lives. Please recognize that educators are not only exhausted, but we are fed up, and ultimately that means that our students are paying the price. Decisions like this are one of the many straws breaking the camel's back, and more and more teachers are leaving the profession because of it.

I hope you stand with educators and allow districts room within the calendar to make decisions that fit the needs of their communities. Thank you for taking time to read my comments today.

In solidarity,
Adam Gutierrez

From: [Buzzardo Norris](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:50:34 PM

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I am an APS educator, ATF union member, APS parent and grandparent. 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.

Dwayne Norris

From: [Debra Romero](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] school calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:55:45 PM

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Why am I here?

One of the biggest reasons that drew me to the northern part of New Mexico to teach, in Cimarrón specifically, is the four-day school week. I am a highly qualified teacher with 15 years of experience in the classroom. I am a level 2 teacher. I've been a mentor for student teachers, new teachers and a lead teacher for my department. I've been a member of numerous committees throughout the years. I served as part of the leadership team at my previous school.

I left all of that because of the 4 day school week.

As a teacher, I often put my family last and my students first. Having a four day school week allows me to tend to my elderly mother of 86 years old. I am able to take her to her doctors which are out of town. In addition to caring for my mother, I'm able to help my fiancé with the managing of our property's responsibilities.

This is why I applied to Cimarrón, NM because of the school calendar in place.

This rural community relies heavily on travel to get to doctor appointments, groceries, vehicle maintenance, etc. Having a four day school week allows me and 3 other educators in my community of Miami, NM to take care of our personal needs without missing a day of classroom instruction.

I came here to serve the students and families of this rural community of Cimarron. I know I am an asset. My biggest strength is building healthy relationships with my students. My evaluations in the past have been highly proficient in classroom management and environment. It's not easy to get teachers out here, especially with high recommendations and teaching experience like myself.

I'm starting to question whether I will stay or look for another district, out of state. A district with doctors, a hospital, and grocery stores in the same county.

I urge you to please do not take away the autonomy of school districts and their ability to make local decisions that are appropriate for their communities.

There is already a teacher shortage. Many will leave their current positions. Having a four day week is what draws educators in, in today's competitive market.

Sincerely,
Ms. Romero

From: [Rachel Pacheco Duran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:57:54 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.

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.

Rachel Pacheco-Duran
rachel.pachecoduran@aps.edu
Teacher SPED Social Studies
Sandia High School
7501 Candelaria Rd NE
Albuquerque NM, 87110
505-294-1511 Ext. 30195

From: [Renee Sallee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule NMAC 6.10.5 comment
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 2:58:32 PM

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After reading the opinion piece submitted by Arsenio Romero on December 11th, I decided to do some fact checking. I researched every school district's calendar and made a list of 4-day and 5-day schools. I then looked up each district's math, reading, science, and attendance scores on nmvistas.org. The following are the averages for each category:

	Math	Reading	Science	Attendance
4-days	30.13	39.09	38.84	69.22
5-days	22.65	30.51	29.14	58.44
Difference	7.48	8.58	9.70	10.78

In the opinion piece, Mr. Romero stated: "New Mexico ranks poorly in reading and math proficiency, with only 38% of students in New Mexico testing as proficient in reading and 24% proficient in math." According to the scores reported on nmvistas.org, 4-day schools are better performing than 5-day schools according to nmvistas.org in reading, math, and science.

Mr. Romero also stated: "We (PED) are investing in addressing chronic absenteeism." The numbers prove that 4-day schools experience less absences than 5-day schools. The results break down as follows:

	90-99%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	1-59%
4-days	9.37% (3)	18.75% (6)	28.13% (9)	18.75% (6)	25.00% (8)
5-days	1.75% (1)	5.26% (3)	21.05% (12)	22.81% (13)	49.12% (28)

By requiring more students to attend school all five weekdays, the number of absences will increase due to the number of students that are allowed to use that one weekday to plan for doctor's appointments.

Mr. Romero inaccurately cited the RAND blog. He also failed to add that there is no quantitative data to prove students who attend 4-day schools are not growing like students who attend 5-day schools. Clicking the links on the RAND blog will allow one to read about parent and teacher perceptions and feelings, but no statistical data comparing scores.

Mr. Romero stated: "The governor and Legislature have invested record levels of funding for schools." Are they prepared to pay teachers for the extra days? Or are they planning on not

paying for the extra days while still expecting “high quality teaching” with less money? PED has pushed for social-emotional learning since returning to the classroom after the pandemic. Requiring students to be in school 18-36 more days every year is not benefiting teachers or students social-emotional health. More days in school equals more homework, more assignments to be graded, and more resources (e.g., paper, electricity, travel, food, heating/cooling, etc.) being used. More days in school equals less time with family. A RAND research brief asked elementary parents: “If you were to have the choice between a four-day school week or a five-day school week, which would you choose?” The results show:

- 69% definitely four-day
- 15% probably four-day
- 9% probably five-day
- 7% definitely five-day

Parents and teachers prefer a four-day school week. The research shows that four-day schools are beneficial to students, families, and staff.

Sincerely,
Renee Sallee

From: [Cantrell, Karlee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 Day School Week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:01:04 PM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Karlee Cantrell. I am a lifetime resident of eastern New Mexico and proud to call this place my home. I attended school in Logan. Where we operated on a 4-day school week. I cannot say enough good things in regard to our school system. This new proposal poses a huge issue for my community and so many other small communities in eastern NM.

To begin:

- **State Law 22-2-8.1** only specifies a minimum number of instructional hours needed, NOT a minimum number of days.
- **State Law 22-8-23.14** specifically authorizes schools to operate on either 4- or 5-day school weeks... AND departmental regulations **CANNOT prohibit** something which is authorized by statute.
- The high school graduation rate for 4-day school weeks is consistently higher than that of the 5-day school weeks.
 - For example – Logan High Schools most recent 4-year graduation rate is 97.3%, I am a proud graduate of the LHS class of 2021 and am proud to say I am part of the 97.3%
 - Also, our graduation rate of 97.3% is significantly higher than the state average of 76%
- Logan Elementary also boasts incredible Student Achievement in Reading. They have 79% reading proficiency rate which is more than double the states of average of 38%.
- Logan Elementary ALSO boasts incredible scores in math at 61% proficiency rate in Student Achievement in Math, which is again more than double the state average of 24%.

These are the facts, and numbers of this caliber cannot be ignored. The state cannot force our small districts to conform to the Albuquerque schedule when our way is consistently outpacing what the state claims is “better for everyone”.

Not only am I a graduate of Logan High School, but my mom, Holli Cantrell, is the kindergarten teacher at Logan Elementary. As the facts above show, Logan Elementary is providing a very high-quality education and learning environment which is reflected in the scores. My mom, Mrs. Cantrell, is setting the foundation for the years to come for each child. The elementary school’s scores cannot be looked over or ignored, our 4-day school week WORKS. To touch on the middle school and high school, most all juniors and seniors are taking at least one dual credit class, which you must qualify for. The teachers in the middle school and high school work diligently to prepare the students for these dual credit classes as well as being full time college students. I am currently attending Texas Tech University, where I hold a 4.0 and am in multiple honor student associations. Credit can only be given to my teachers and family who established a drive and passion for education. I plan to apply to the Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program here as well. Logan High School is where I found my

passion to serve. The meaning to all of this is that my 4-day school week was not under providing, when in fact it did so much more. I was also a 3-sport student athlete, member and officer of the FFA program, member and officer of NHS, and a class officer. The 4-day school week provided me opportunities to get caught up on homework, study adequately for tests, and still manage a full-time load.

The numbers cannot be ignored. This is an overreach of power. I strongly urge you to consider to populations and school districts outside of the Albuquerque metro. We may be small, but we do have a voice. As representatives of the PEOPLE, it is your duty to hear us and represent our voices on a bigger stage. Please take out the personal opinions, and look at the facts, they do not lie. Logan Schools continues to produce outstanding results, making us change would be crazy. I appreciate you taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Karlee Cantrell

Email: karcantr@ttu.edu

From: [Natalyn Jaramillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; ACT](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180-day school year
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:02:37 PM

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Hello,

Here are some reasons I do not agree with the 180-day school year.

- 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.

It is important to listen to educators' feedback since we are in the classroom doing the best we can with what we have. More days will not help our students.

Ms. Natalyn Jaramillo
Cibola High School
Chemistry and Astronomy Teacher
natalyn.jaramillo@aps.edu

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From: [Kiairi Green](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:03:57 PM

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Dear Lawmakers,

I trust this email finds you well. I am writing to express my concerns regarding the recent proposals that impact educators in our school. While we recognize the challenges that the education system faces, it is crucial to address these issues collaboratively to ensure the best outcomes for both educators and students.

Firstly, educators have demonstrated unwavering dedication by shouldering increased instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year. However, sustaining these efforts without commensurate support is becoming increasingly challenging. To provide effective instruction, we believe it is imperative to have educators actively involved in the decision-making process, particularly when changes to working conditions are being considered.

Making unilateral changes without soliciting input from educators has historically proven to drive professionals out of the education profession. Therefore, I strongly advocate for a more inclusive approach that values the insights and experiences of those directly involved in the teaching process.

Moreover, the current proposal represents a significant disruption to the lives of educators and students alike. The absence of consideration for adult collaborative learning time, nor the time needed for Parent-Teacher Conferences, is concerning. The current law (HB 130) is based on the concept that adult learning is intricately linked to student learning, and any deviation from this principle may have adverse effects on the quality of education.

I would also like to draw attention to the method of enacting changes through rule rather than adhering to established laws, as outlined in HB 130. This approach is perceived as an overstepping of the executive branch and raises concerns about the transparency and legitimacy of the decision-making process. It is reminiscent of past tactics that have been divisive and counterproductive in the education sector.

Furthermore, the proposed solution appears to be a superficial response to a complex problem. While additional seat time is important, it is not the sole solution. Our students face multifaceted challenges, including chronic health conditions, disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse, and neglect. To address these issues comprehensively, we advocate for the implementation of specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) teams in every preK-12 school. These teams, composed of licensed professionals, work collaboratively with teachers and parents to address barriers to educational success and create positive conditions for learning.

I appreciate your attention to these concerns and urge for a collaborative dialogue that takes into account the perspectives of educators, who are dedicated to the success and well-being of our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kiaira L Green
Licensed Special Education Teacher

From: [Kandiz Garlick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to State
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:04:31 PM

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December 6, 2023

Policy and legislative Affairs Division
New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Ave., Room 121
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am an eighth-grade student at Elida, New Mexico. I do not agree with the 180 days (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS). We the community we need the three-day weekend because we do FFA, Rodeo, and helping on the ranch. I need that time to be with my family and doing life things. I would miss a lot of school because of the rodeo, hunting, and ranching needs if we are made to go 180 days. My family runs a ranch, so time is needed to move cows, doctor cows, feed cows and much more. This is our way of life, so it is important to have time to do this stuff as a family. This is why we should not go to 180 days for school (6.10.5.7.C. NMAC SCHOOL CALENDAR REQUIREMENTS).

A Concerned Student,
Kandiz Anthony

From: [Jennifer Cunico](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Instructional hours
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:08:08 PM

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Hi, Stop taking prep time away and expecting teachers to create and implement higher quality instruction!!

Teachers already do not have the time to complete all the non instructional tasks expected of them. New Mexico provides mediocre public education at best. Providing more mediocre public education is not going to make the education better, just longer. If you truly want to improve the public education children receive in the state of New Mexico, teachers need the time to plan and prepare quality lessons that are differentiated for each student. They need the time to analyze data and translate it into instruction.

Most approaches to improve public education in New Mexico seem to stem from the idea that teachers are lazy and do not want to provide quality instruction. This is false. If teachers were provided with the time and support to develop in depth, quality lesson plans that include the appropriate materials for the lessons, you would find that these teachers are hard working, dedicated professionals who will provide top quality instruction to New Mexico's children.

Stop taking prep time away and expecting teachers to create and implement higher quality instruction!!

Jennifer Cunico
Albuquerque Public Schools
Preschool Coach
505 253-0320 ext. 44338
cunico_j@aps.edu

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From: [Joey GURULE](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org; [Dixon, Meredith](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Rule Change
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:12:09 PM

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Dear NM Public Education Department,

I am writing to express my disappointment with the NMPED and its leadership in proposing to change the school year via executive rule. Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the executive branch. This is reminiscent of the tactics used by former Gov. Susanna Martinez and her secretary of education, Hannah Skandera. I supported Governor Lujan Grisham because voters were tired of these kinds of actions and it is deeply disheartening that this administration, has too, turned to the same tactics. Hypocrisy?

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. The NMPED and Gov. Grisham should focus on fulfilling the promises made to educators, like a reduction in paperwork that was promised, promoted and then never delivered on.

If the PED believes more should be done we should continue our collaborative work with the state legislature rather than unilateral decision making by PED that doesn't take the interests of each community into consideration. As a public educator I can't even tell you the name of our secretary of education much less back their position. With that said perhaps NMPED should spend their time building a community that knows and respects them before pushing their one sided ideas onto the population.

I would like to urge the NMPED to vote against any action that usurps the legislative body we worked with diligently and put its efforts toward building a public education department that can gain the public's trust.

Best regards,

Joey Gurule
New Mexico Educator

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ariane Moran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:13:48 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing today in regards to the rule change that would institute a 180-day school year for all New Mexico schools, voiding the current calendars which were changed this year to accommodate the 1,140 hours of instruction legislated in HB 130 and signed into law by the Governor at the close of the 2023 session. Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the Executive Branch. This move is reminiscent of the tactics used by Governor Susana Martinez and her Secretary of Education Hannah Skandera; as Democrats you, we, are supposed to be better than this. For too long have educators shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours with little to no support. Simply increasing the hours or days that students are forced to attend school does not address the larger problems facing the community and is, quite frankly, the lazy way of trying to solve a much larger problem. Our students are affected by chronic health concerns, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Our focus should be on staffing our schools to meet the need of the whole child: 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. Further, we need to allow time for students to be KIDS. They need time to enjoy the summer, to play and explore and travel. They need time to spend with their families; to bond and play. Forcing them into more school time deprives them of valuable time with family and friends and the valuable life lessons, bonding and experiences that go hand in hand with that.

We must let the Legislative Branch do its job and not allow the Executive Branch to overstep its authority. We must give the current calendar time to show real data and results; one year is NOT enough time to learn or gather any type of real or useful information. The current proposal by the Governor's office is not only a disgusting overstep of authority but it is also a false solution to a complex problem. Students need much more than additional seat time to succeed and it is time that someone is brave enough to fight for the whole child.

Respectfully,

A teacher and a parent

From: [Kay Leigh Gamboa](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changing the school year
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:14:21 PM

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To whom this may concern-

I am really frustrated with the thought of the school year changing. I feel that the students who currently come to school, always come to school. The students who are chronically absent or tardy, always are. This is nothing new. If students are not at school their test scores of course will be low. We need to address the chronic absent rate and bring pressure among the parents to have students at school. This should not fall on teachers. Teachers plates are already soooo full! Each year we are asked to add more to our plates. How much more could possibly add in 7 hrs of work. Please address the absent rate! Please take this action first before increasing the students' school year.

Thank you!

--

Kay Leigh Gamboa
Teacher
Sierra Vista Elementary
kayleigh.gamboa@aps.edu

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From: [Ariane Moran](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:14:22 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing today in regards to the rule change that would institute a 180-day school year for all New Mexico schools, voiding the current calendars which were changed this year to accommodate the 1,140 hours of instruction legislated in HB 130 and signed into law by the Governor at the close of the 2023 session. Changing law through rule is unacceptable and is an overstep of the Executive Branch. This move is reminiscent of the tactics used by Governor Susana Martinez and her Secretary of Education Hannah Skandera; as Democrats you, we, are supposed to be better than this. For too long have educators shouldered the increases of instructional and professional development hours with little to no support. Simply increasing the hours or days that students are forced to attend school does not address the larger problems facing the community and is, quite frankly, the lazy way of trying to solve a much larger problem. Our students are affected by chronic health concerns, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Our focus should be on staffing our schools to meet the need of the whole child: 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. Further, we need to allow time for students to be KIDS. They need time to enjoy the summer, to play and explore and travel. They need time to spend with their families; to bond and play. Forcing them into more school time deprives them of valuable time with family and friends and the valuable life lessons, bonding and experiences that go hand in hand with that.

We must let the Legislative Branch do its job and not allow the Executive Branch to overstep its authority. We must give the current calendar time to show real data and results; one year is NOT enough time to learn or gather any type of real or useful information. The current proposal by the Governor's office is not only a disgusting overstep of authority but it is also a false solution to a complex problem. Students need much more than additional seat time to succeed and it is time that someone is brave enough to fight for the whole child.

Respectfully,

A teacher and a parent

From: [Candice Barrera](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:16:29 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing this email in hopes that you would consider my feedback regarding the proposed rule change for school calendars in New Mexico. Requiring all schools to operate on a 5-day week does not work for everyone. I find it extremely concerning when rules that affect so many are mandated without considering the people who are actually doing the work. This decision belongs to the leaders and citizens it mostly affects in each individual community...one size does not fit all! In education we are all about providing students what they need, which means all school calendars may not look the same.

Students should be the main focus in this decision. Mandating that they attend school for more days and more hours is NOT the answer. A bigger shift needs to happen in education. An answer may be found, again, by creating a committee of the people it involves...teachers, students, parents. What would they like to see their educational experience be like? How would they like to learn? What kind of training do they need to do the job, (within their normal work hours, of course)? It's time the people in the decision making roles empower those that will do the work. That does not mean appeasing them with a hearing as a formality, but actually taking into consider their plan or ideas.

Some ideas that I think could work are allowing schools to have an option of a four or five day week considering their population of students. Instead of a rule change to take away a four day week, we should be considering all schools on a four day calendar, finding a creative use of that fifth day. Incorporate differentiation as a district, setting aside a fifth day for students that may need tutoring.

Offer an extra stipend or incentive pay to any staff that will work on the 5th day to support students that are falling behind. This optional 5th day would also be a good opportunity to provide effective professional development or a much needed teacher work day that teachers can lesson plan, analyze data, or prepare materials for the upcoming week. This type of schedule would go a long way for teacher morale and retention. We need to keep great teachers in our schools so students can continue learning.

Please leave this decision to our trained leaders to make.

Sincerely,
~Candice Barrera

Candice Barrera
Deputy Director/Dossier Consultant
Pecos Valley REC #8
[R9-Dossier Resources/Support](#)
Email: cbarrera@pvrec8.com
Ph: (575)748-6100 ext. 6101

From: [Anais Corral](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:16:35 PM

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Hello,

I'm not in favor of extending the school calendar. My sister is part of the Loving Middle School. I when to Loving High School through 2017 to 2021. Both of us loved the schedule of four days school. It give students and teachers time to spend with family and friends. I allow for students and teachers to have more free time to do other activities.

Sincerely,

Anais Corral

From: [Kelley, Patsy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule, Letter of Opposition.pdf
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:21:16 PM

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As a resident of Texico we will continue to fight this!!!

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From: [Joe Arrowsmith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:21:27 PM

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Dear PED,

I am writing this email in response to the proposed school calendar changes for the 24/25 academic calendar. I vehemently oppose these changes. As a newer teacher (3rd year teaching), this will be the third different calendar that I have had to adapt to. This is making myself, and my fellow colleagues who are new teachers, want to leave the teaching profession entirely. What good will that do to our struggling education system, new teachers leaving and older teachers retiring?

We always talk about the stress that our students are going through, with the new micro-credential teaching us about creating a safe classroom environment (which is important!), but what about us teachers. We went through our student teaching during COVID and the continuing aftereffects, having to learn on the job after much of our learning was done online, and then the continued upheaval from the omniscient higher-ups who have all the answers to our struggling education system (despite those same issues continuing). This has all led to massive stress on educators (not just the new teachers, as many older teachers are choosing to retire rather than continue), and causing my colleagues and myself to consider other professions.

Therefore, I do not think this new calendar is a good idea. We are already using our own time to plan and grade, collaborate with our fellow educators and run after school activities. This proposed calendar will eat into that time even more and push people who love teaching and love seeing that spark in a students eye when they finally "get it" away from the children who need that care, attention, effort, and love the most.

Yours sincerely,
Joseph Arrowsmith

From: [Allyson Warrick](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:29:26 PM

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This letter is in reference to and is written with a negative vote for the PEDs' "6.10.5 NMAC Proposed Rule". This rule is in direct conflict of multiple state statutes and Public School Code (22-2-8.1) and the Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14). The fact that this proposed rule change is in conflict with the above mentioned statutes, it is illegal for the PED to propose such a rule.

Public School Code, Section 22-2-8.1 speaks specifically of "professional work hours" being included in or may be utilized as a portion of the instructional hours. The proposed regulation requires that the proposed number of days be "exclusive of teacher professional work hours". This would mean that PD be in addition to the 180 calendar days. Also, in regard to this code, it only speaks of a minimum number of instructional hours, not a minimum number of days.

Public School Finance Act, Section 22-8-23.14 authorizes schools or school districts to operate on either a 4- day or 5-day school week. The PED's regulations or rules cannot be in direct conflict with state statute.

Texico Municipal Schools prides itself on the academic success that our students have earned or achieved. Our elementary and middle school are "Schools of Excellence", and our high school is recognized as a "Spotlight School". We have two schools, our high school and middle school, that have recently been recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. Specifically, for "closing the achievement gap". Our expectations are second to none and we have developed the appropriate relationships with this community where our parents support our high expectations, and they assist us in holding students accountable for their success. We are and have been recognized as the number 1 rated school district in the state of New Mexico by Niche, an independent organization that compares schools across each state and the country. All of the success that we have is achieved on a hybrid 4-day week calendar. We have class/instruction for 1246.94 hours, which is well above most 5-day week schools. We have and will continue to work hard to ensure our students success.

The proposed rule will be detrimental to the education of children across our state in many ways. The bulleted points below are just a few of the ways this proposed rule change would be negative for our school district.

There are 700+ vacancies across the state and we had 4 teachers in our elementary school stated yesterday that they would retire or find something else to do rather than work the additional days. I can only imagine how that number will increase across the state, especially in larger districts. Instructional strategies would change, especially at the secondary level, class length would decline. We currently have approximately 55 minutes per class period at our secondary schools which allows for teaching of new material, guided/independent practice, assessment, and re-teaching within a class period. With a shorter day, class sizes/length would be reduced to approximately 40 minutes, which would not allow for the above mentioned sequencing of teaching & learning.

Attendance rates across the state are abysmal and adding another day of instruction would only make it worse. We encourage parents to schedule appointments on Fridays, schedule as many school events as possible on Fridays, therefore not interrupting instruction by having students who participate in co- curricular, extra-curricular activities absent from instruction on Friday.

Facility and transportation costs would increase by approximately 20%.

Teacher contracts would have to be extended beyond the 180 days of instruction to account for professional development that will be excluded from the instructional time. We simply do not have the funds to increase salaries. Teacher and staff daily rates of pay would decrease. Therefore, devaluing their profession. This is definitely a negative, especially when it is very difficult to fill the positions across the state that are unfilled at this time. It will only get worse if this rule becomes reality.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [David Payne](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:32:26 PM

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Hello, I'm a 45 year old who is in my 3rd year of teaching. I changed professions based on the idea that I could help change the future for the better.

I feel strongly that I give a safe space to the kids in my class, and on my best days I help them with more than just lessons. But my title 1 school doesn't have a counselor. We have some great people who work here but we all need more support.

Let's figure out how to get more people at school campuses who help with the basic societal needs so students can focus on learning in the classroom. While we're at it, let's pay Educational Assistants liveable wages so teachers get support they need, while those positions don't just sit open.

I don't think another increase in school days is what will help our students at my school succeed.

Dave Payne
Special Education Teacher, Yearbook Teacher
Certified Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner
Wilson Middle School 505-268-3961 ext 27122 Room 505
Google Voice: 505-226-4092

From: [Jacqueline Cook](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:35:23 PM

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To whom this may concern in our NM PED:

I was horrified to learn of your proposed strikethrough actions against HB 130 which was passed earlier this year. Your proposed action flies in the face of the democratic process and signals a blatant disregard for the professionals who heeded the calling to teach.

It is beyond my comprehension how, despite data to the contrary, you continue to equate extended seat time with increased learning for young people. You can't fix poverty by extending the school year. To quote an article on this very subject that appeared in USnews.com, "Simply calling on all school districts to extend the school year isn't a viable solution. We need to find ways to meet kids, families and educators where they are, and figure out what's best for students and what they need during those extra months. **Top-down, one-size-fits-all solutions don't work.**"

It is beyond my comprehension why, unlike any other profession, time spent meeting with stakeholders (parents, administration, and colleagues) and required training should be considered activities that are beyond the domain of instruction!

I would appreciate it if you would stop wasting our valuable time with your draconian "fixes" and let us do our jobs.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Cook
Gifted Education, Georgia O'Keeffe Elementary School
11701 San Victorio Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111

"The natural trajectory of giftedness in childhood is not a six-figure salary, perfect happiness, and a guaranteed place in Who's Who. It is the deepening of the personality, the strengthening of one's value system, the creation of greater and greater challenges for oneself, and the development of broader avenues for expressing compassion." —Dr. Linda K. Silverman Counseling the Gifted and Talented

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From: [Lauri Figg](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose HB 130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:41:11 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-stkxelyx.png](#)

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To Whom It May Concern,

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

Educators are encouraged to differentiate because not all students learn and perform at the same level. However, HB 130 requires all schools to use the same calendar when it is proven that not all schools are identical. Texico Schools have successfully utilized a 4-day-a-week calendar for 12 years.

Being a parent and an educator at Texico Schools, I see the benefits of our current schedule from both sides of the table. Texico Schools have proven successful in both the classroom and the athletic arena, winning two state championships this fall. Recently, our middle school also received the Blue Ribbon Award.

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 number 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 local administration's discretion in the local children's best interest. 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 backward. 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. Families are encouraged to make appointments and schedule trips on Fridays, and in turn, absences are reduced.

Conclusively, the 4-day school week allows New Mexico educators to mold high school graduates who 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,

Lauri Figg

Texico Middle School ELA

Texico High School Yearbook Advisor

Texico Middle School and High School Parent



From: [Carmen Healy](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:43:55 PM

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Dear Secretary Romero,

I am a teacher at East Mountain High School and I'm writing today to ask you to reconsider some of the proposed changes to high school calendars recently proposed by the Public Education Department (6.10.5 NMAC).

As a junior English teacher, my main concern with the proposal is the new requirement that students be in four classes a day. Our school is on a block schedule and I teach half the junior class English in the fall semester, and the other half English in the spring semester. With 85 minute classes, this gives students the ability to prepare for college length courses and allows us to deeply engage in Socratic Seminars and to delve into our lessons in a way that is not possible to do in 45-60 minute classes. Our juniors hold after school jobs, play on sports teams, participate in extracurricular activities, volunteer in the community, and take courses at CNM. Many of them have late arrival and early release and have three classes a semester. This extra period off is usually spent keeping up with the extra homework demands of our rigorous junior year curriculum, preparing for their SAT/ACT, working on extracurricular projects, or meeting with our college counselors. I see this proposed rule change as a major detriment to many of the amazing things East Mountain High is able to do for juniors. This year is a crucial time for college applications and our school has created an effective schedule to support juniors. Disrupting the effective system we have intentionally created would not benefit our students.

Additionally, as a school in a mountain community, we rely more than other schools on remote learning days and I am concerned that four remote days is not enough given the harsh weather conditions we experience. Remote Days are not "off days" for our students. We look at the weather report, prepare handouts and check out library books days in advance in case of snow. We communicate to students what our plan is for remote learning and adjust our lesson plans accordingly. On remote days, we interact with students on Google Classroom and through email frequently throughout the day. Even when the main roads are plowed, many of our families cannot get out of their driveways and it isn't safe for young drivers to be on icy or snow packed roads. Remote days allow us to keep our students learning in a safe environment. I urge you to allow us to continue supporting students in a way that keeps them safe during harsh winter storm conditions.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Carmen Healy

--

Carmen Healy (she/her/hers)
Humanities Instructor

From: [Laura Berlin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do not extend the school year again
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:56:00 PM

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Hello,

As an educator, here are a few reasons why I feel it is important to keep the school year as it is.

- 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.

I am not sure how PED could call something they implemented four months ago ineffective. Inadequate evidence is in place to support this claim.

Kind Regards,

--



Laura Berlin
Independent Student Coordinator
laura.berlin@aps.edu
505-373-0102

From: [mikayla sehlmeyer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:02:58 PM

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NM PED,

Before you make these changes without any teacher input you need to step foot into the classroom. 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 am a year and half into this profession and I don't know how much more I can give with your constant changes and unrealistic expectations....

Sincerely,

Mikayla Sehlmeyer, M.B.A.
(she/her/hers)

From: [Debbie Alexander](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:09:30 PM

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I am writing against rule HB130 that is trying to force our rural community to go 180 days instead of the current schedule we have. I teach second grade at Cloudcroft Elementary School.. We are a spotlight school. My students have shown so much growth pn i-station. I use my Monday off to plan wonderful and science based lessons for my students as well as analyze their data. I also use Mondays to travel to doctor's appointments which are always 2 hours away. 5 day school days will negatively impact our students as teachers will be less prepared and more absent. Students also are the ones running the town. The library is only open Mondays now because a junior in high school is able to run it. Most of the waitstaff are also high school students trying to support their families. We have been this way for 13 years and we have so many transfer students here from Alamogordo. Alamogordo has a 5 day week. Yet so many parents send their kids up here for a better education. This before you just decide to randomly make rules for an entire state. What is true in Albuquerque is not the same in tiny villages!

Debbie Alexander

--

Debbie Alexander
Second Grade
Cloudcroft Elementary School

From: [Geraldine Martinez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:20:50 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am a physical therapist who is in my 19th year working for APS. Prior to working for APS, I worked at University Hospital, here in Albuquerque, for 20 years. As such, I have experience working in pediatrics.

I must say that the schedule changes this school year have been challenging for students and staff. Changing the school start times, with very little advance notice to plan for the change, has been disruptive. I understand the science behind the changes. However, the implementation of this big change has been far from smooth, and has affected students in unexpected ways.

As one example, I work in a high school special education classroom that had the following schedule last school year: shortly after students arrived in the morning, staff took them out to the school track, for walking (if they were ambulatory), for adaptive trike riding (if able to ride a trike), or in their wheelchair. According to the teacher, this activity appeared to "ground" the students. After exercising, they had breakfast and toileting, then they were ready to engage in academics. This school year, since they don't arrive until 8:40, the first activity has to be breakfast. After breakfast there is toileting, then academics begin. It has been difficult for the teacher to "fit in" the school track activity after breakfast and toileting. The teacher has reported that the lack of exercise first thing in the morning has impacted some of his students' ability and willingness to engage in academic activities. This is just one example in one classroom, but I am sure there are many other examples of disruption throughout the district.

In addition to changing the start times, the length of the school day has been altered for some schools. Also, the timing and structure of the PD days, in my opinion, has been less than optimal. Specifically, the week of November 6-10, 2023, was a nightmare. On Monday 11/6, we had a PD day. There was no school for grades K-8. High school was in session, as were TOPS schools. I work with students at all grade levels. I was expected to attend PD on 11/6, but also work with my high school and TOPS students who were at school that day. The next day, 11/7, was a PD day with no students at school. All students then attended school on 11/8 and 11/9. Then, there was no school on 11/10 (Veteran's Day)! What an inconsistent mess.

I can only guess that the changes this school year have been difficult for families as well. If families have children at multiple grade levels, I can predict that the structuring of the PD days has been problematic. If your elementary age child is not at school because of PD, but your high schooler is at school, and would typically take care of the younger child while the parent is at work, what do you do for child care? Again, this is only 1 scenario. I can guess that there are many other ways families have been impacted.

I work in special education. Since the return of in-person schooling post-pandemic, more students are exhibiting difficult behaviors. Creating more change for these students is not helpful. In addition, we are operating with fewer staff members. Many people I work with are discussing retirement. Working for APS has become difficult.

What I've learned over the years of working with children is that they need consistency. They need predictability and structure. They do not do well with multiple changes, especially if those changes occur in a short period of time.

I do think that the structuring of the PD schedule could be improved, so that there is consistency across all grade levels. Beyond that, the idea that other schedule changes would be implemented, before students, families and staff have even had time to adjust to the new changes this school year, seems not only misguided but is bordering on cruel.

Respectfully,
Geri Martinez

From: [Sandy Sacher](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:21:58 PM

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Dear NMPED,

The current proposal to change the school year requirements is completely unacceptable. In an effort to make drastic changes to the schedule, you will assuredly lose many wonderful educators as well as disrupt the lives of our students' families. Once again. The following are more reasons not to pass this ruling.

- 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.

Sincerely,
Sandy Sacher
APS Teacher

"Something very magical happens in those classrooms where skilled and caring adults, who celebrate diversity, are committed to truly inclusive teaching and learning"

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From: [Melissa Smith](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:22:12 PM

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There are so many reasons why a five day school week for rural New Mexico communities needs more consideration.

NUMBER ONE: I won't be able to keep my job! I am THE kindergarten teacher in Red River, where it is already very hard to find teachers. I LOVE my job! I love my students and I want to continue working with the students in my community but changing to a 5 day school week would make my personal life needs challenging not to mention that I have a family who I have obligations to. In our school, we could potentially lose several teachers and that is a HUGE problem. If I were able to continue to teach during a 5 day school week, would that fall on me?!? Would my class size be larger? Are we covering for people when they need to go to the doctor? We have ONE SUB for our school! ONE! and we have ONE aide!! We are already stretched thin enough.

In Red River, as with many other rural communities, the nearest doctor is an hour or more away. One of my doctors is in Los Alamos. My appointments, as well as my child's appointments, are all scheduled on the weekday that we do not have school. It would be impossible for me to make an appointment after school during a 5 day school week. My health and family's needs are important!

Along the same lines of this, access to prescriptions and other medical needs are not accessible in rural NM. The pharmacies up here are not open on the weekend and I would not make it in time after school to drive over an hour to pick up prescriptions for myself and my family. This same problem is the same when it comes to the maintenance of my car. I can't run after school to get my oil changed at the place down the street because IT DOES NOT EXIST IN RURAL NEW MEXICO!! I have to drive over an hour away.

All of these things HAVE BEEN (for years!) easy to do with having our school day fit into a 4 day school week because we can safely drive (during the day) to have our personal needs met.

I also can't just run to WalMart or the grocery store after school, so you would be limiting my access to affordable food for my family.

Teachers of young children would need another day of childcare. Our pay is already horrible and now more would go to childcare.

Some students in our school, including my child, live several miles away from the school so that means I would have one more day of fuel to pay for the back and forth and fuel is expensive! Also, what time would students be getting out? Right now, they get out at 4pm and sometimes 5pm on extended days - it's dark when they get home. When would school get out? There isn't enough staff in rural NM to hold after school programs. Child care DOES NOT exist?!? Where do all the kids go at 2:30 or whenever school gets out. Right now, our students dismiss almost at the end of a work day for families and it works into their schedule.

This is a terrible "rule" and needs to be reconsidered for the sake of rural New Mexico! I can't believe this is considered ok to miss with people's livelihoods. Teaching is hard enough and there are additional challenges being a teacher in a rural community. Please consider the above before making this decision.

--

Melissa Smith

Red River Valley Charter School

From: [David Hurt](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:24:28 PM

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Animas Student Body
1Panther BLVD.
Animas, New Mexico

88020

Governor Micelle Lujan Grisham
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Room 400
Santa Fe, New Mexico
87501
December 7,2023

Dear Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham:

We are writing you regarding the proposed 5-day school week mandate and how it would be detrimental to rural communities in New Mexico. School districts in New Mexico have been quite successful on the 4-day school week for many years. If a school is truly struggling, the state steps in and takes over the school district, however, when a school is successful, they are allowed to work as an independent district. Public Schools have been independent and successful for years on a 4-day school week.

Most of the student body in the Animas Public School district is involved with farms and ranches. Our community's primary source of income comes from the agricultural community. The families that make up our community depend on help from everyone including students. Working on a farm or ranch requires dedication as well as a good work ethic. It is difficult to balance school and work within such a close-knit, agriculturally focused community. If we add another day, it will make it that much harder. Every student in our community is involved in an extra circular activity, in addition to the work we must do at home. As a community we hold the belief that adding an extra day might not serve the best interests of our students or community; rather, it could potentially have a detrimental impact on both. This addition might prove more disadvantageous than beneficial for our students and the wider community.

Also, another thing to consider is that the closest town is nearly two hours away. Therefore, to see specialty doctors and dentists, go grocery shopping, go to the bank, etc., families must travel two hours and end up running errands all day. With a five-day school week, families and students will be unable to attend school on Fridays, therefore increasing the number of absences in the state. However, with a four-day school week, students and families will be able to go to town, run errands, and not have to worry about missing school. If we want to fix the number of absences, making a four-day school week into five days will not solve the problem. Fridays are utilized to do schoolwork, run errands, rest, work, and participate in

extracurriculars.

The studies examining the effects of a four-day school week reveal several promising benefits that extend beyond mere academic considerations. With an extended weekend, students seem to benefit from improved attendance, potentially leading to enhanced academic performance. Notably, the observed improvement in student attendance stemming from the longer weekend allows for more rest and engagement in extracurricular pursuits, setting the stage for heightened participation and academic focus during the school week. A four-day schedule appears to foster a more positive school climate by reducing incidents of fighting and bullying, creating a calmer and safer environment. Qualitative findings, such as improvements in student well-being, behavioral attitudes, and a positive impact on the overall school atmosphere, further support the advantages of a four-day school week.

The current structure of a five-day school week can inadvertently generate detrimental effects on both students and educators. Research has pointed out the adverse consequences, notably the heightened stress levels experienced by students due to prolonged hours dedicated to academic pursuits, extracurricular commitments, and homework. Studies published in esteemed journals like the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* and the *American Educational Research Journal* indicate a correlation between longer school weeks and increased stress among students, potentially jeopardizing their mental well-being and overall development. Additionally, the intensified schedule limits students' opportunities for relaxation and engagement in non-academic activities, negatively impacting their holistic growth. Moreover, this demanding regimen also takes a toll on teachers, leading to burnout and diminishing the quality of instruction and teacher-student relationships. Reports from organizations like the National Education Association reinforce the adverse effects of extended work hours on teacher morale and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the financial burden placed on families, in terms of escalated childcare expenses or the need for supplementary resources to accommodate longer school hours, underscores the need for a four-day week.

According to statistics schools that participate in a 4-day school week have an on average a higher productivity rate compared to schools that have a 5-day school week. In New Mexico's grading system, Melrose who goes 4 days is higher than schools in Albuquerque. Along with the productivity rate, schools that participate in the 4-day school week have a higher graduation rate than those who participate in a 5-day school week. With a 4-day school week, teachers will be able to plan and grade papers and students are less likely to burn out.

In conclusion, the proposed shift from a successful 4-day school week to a mandated 5-day schedule in rural communities like ours in New Mexico raises significant concerns that warrant careful consideration. The current system, deeply ingrained in the fabric of our community, not only accommodates our unique lifestyle but also yields tangible benefits for both students and educators. The 4-day week not only allows students to balance academic pursuits with family responsibilities and extracurricular activities but also fosters a healthier school environment. The existing research and statistical evidence further support the advantages of the current system, compared to the standard 5-day school week. Therefore, maintaining the 4-day school week stands as a cornerstone of our community's educational success and overall well-being, ensuring a balanced and thriving environment for both students and the wider community.

From: [Brandon Hays](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to revision for NMAC 6.10.5
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:56:42 PM
Attachments: [C90701FF31DA4CF2ADB8C86119DB781F.png](#)

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As both a career educator and a parent, I stand strongly OPPOSED to the proposed revision to NMAC 6.10.5 for the following reasons:

1) Negative Harm to our Community Culture

Dora Consolidated Schools has successfully operated as a 4-day week school since 1980. Since then, it has become a significant part of our community culture, allowing families to work on farms and ranches together, schedule doctor's appointments, and strengthen family ties. In recent years, the number of transfer students in our district has increased, with the 4-day week being a significant factor for the families choosing to come to our district. PED's proposed rule change will alter our community culture in negative ways. I feel strongly that a district's calendar design should be a local decision, as each community's needs differ. Some of the negative impacts this rule will cause include:

- Less family time for our families, who have specifically chosen to attend a 4-day week school.
- Increased absence rates due to inability to schedule doctor's appointments on the 5th day.
- Many students ride our rural route buses for over 1 ½ hours each morning and evening. These young students would needlessly be on a bus an additional day each week without increasing instructional time.
- This will accelerate the retirement of our veteran staff, causing hardship in hiring new personnel to a rural school district without the 4-day week incentive.
- Continued loss of local control for our school boards and communities.

2) Negative Impact to the Effectiveness of Current Instructional Hours

These negative impacts would come without comprehensive or overwhelming data to support that receiving 1,140 instructional hours over five days a week is more effective than receiving 1,140 instructional hours over four days a week. PED has cited a study that showed a four to seven-week regression each year a student attends a 4-day week school. However, you failed to mention that the study also acknowledges that when you remove schools that reduced school days without increasing the length of their school day, the remaining schools show no student regression. Even though New Mexico schools were involved in this study, the regression findings do not apply since every student in New Mexico receives 1,140 instructional hours. Please don't misuse data to justify your position. This rule is nothing but "smoke and mirrors" as you claim students are going more days but do not acknowledge that instructional hours (which is what matters) are not changing. Our district has proven over the last 43 years that you can increase the length of your days to maintain your overall instructional time with a 4-day week schedule and maintain high academic success. Over the last ten years, Dora has received a National Blue Ribbon, multiple "A" report card grades, "Spotlight" school status, and an NM Best Award from the PED. This rule change will cause the following negative impacts on our education:

- Our longer instructional days allow our secondary students time to work on their independent assignments at the end of class, allowing teachers to assess their understanding before students take it home as homework. Shorter class periods will allow for this to occur less effectively.
- Stretching your hours over five days decreases your "actual" instructional hours. Every teacher knows that you lose instructional time between the transition of classes due to

getting supplies, beginning class routines, and reviewing the prior day's lesson. Having worked for nine years in a 5-day week school, I can attest to the lack of productivity of staff and students on Fridays as compared to the rest of the week.

- Dora has created a culture where we efficiently use our longer blocks of instructional time, even with our elementary students, to minimize wasted time and allow for daily mastery of topics.
- Most of our teachers utilize the additional day during the weekend to grade, analyze data, and plan effective lessons outside their normal work hours.

3) Negative Impact to Our Student's Educational Success

The data for New Mexico 4-day week schools is consistently higher than 5-day week schools across the state, as evidenced by local and state-wide data.

- The HS Graduation Rate for Dora Consolidated Schools is 88%, considerably higher than the state average of 76%.
- The Math Proficiency Rate for Dora Consolidated Schools is 47%, almost double the state average of 25%.
- The Reading Proficiency Rate for Dora Consolidated Schools is 46%, noticeably higher than the state average of 34%.
- According to PED standards, 85% of 4-day week schools meet academic standards compared to 75% of 5-day week schools.
- According to PED standards, 32% of 4-day week schools are designated as "Spotlight" or "Excellence" compared to 23% of 5-day week schools.

4) Negative Precedent of Superseding State Statute

This rule contradicts state statute in the two following ways:

- The NM Public School Code (22-2-8.1) only specifies a minimum number of instructional hours, NOT instructional days. Any rule that attempts to require "days" will be outside the statutory authority of the PED.
- The NM Public School Finance Act (22-8-23.14) explicitly authorizes schools to operate on either 4-day or 5-day school weeks; departmental regulations cannot prohibit something otherwise authorized by statute.

I respectfully ask that the PED abandon the attempt to supersede state statute and properly align NMAC 6.10.5 to HB 130, passed in the last legislative session, thereby not causing educational harm to the students of Dora Consolidated Schools.

Brandon Hays
Superintendent

"It's a great day to be a Coyote!"



From: [Valerie Velhagen](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:57:51 PM

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Dear Public Education Department,

I am writing to address the PED's proposed rule change to institute a 180-day school year for all New Mexico schools. As a Professional School Counselor in my 17th year with APS, I strongly oppose this proposal.

It's been less than five months since the start of this school year with its mandated additional hours; how can anyone say that "it's not working" after such a short time, and short-sightedly mandate additional hours? It was disruptive and demanding enough to ask educators to commit to additional hours, and now the PED proposes adding even more? You are risking educators retiring or otherwise fleeing the profession, after continually being asked to commit to increased hours that seem to be mandated randomly and without even acknowledging what educators have been asked to add to their plates this year.

I have been a College & Career Counselor for 14 years, and can tell you that VERY FEW of my students are interested in going into education and becoming teachers in New Mexico. Why do you think that is? We need to make wise decisions that not only impact the students currently in our classrooms, but to keep (current and potential future) educators feeling like they didn't go into the wrong profession. To provide students effective instruction, we need to keep and appreciate our hard-working educators, not keep trying to squeeze blood from a stone.

Students need more than additional mandated seat time to succeed. Many of the students who are struggling and failing are already ditching and avoiding school. What makes you think that mandating additional seat time will make an impact on chronic absenteeism and lack of interest in school? All it will do is beat down educators and disillusion them about working in the public school system in New Mexico.

Our students are affected by a myriad of complex problems, including chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. PED would do better to put its energy and support behind fully staffing our schools with highly qualified support staff to work with educators and families to address barriers to students' educational success.

Demanding an even longer work year for educators who have already devoted their careers to the children of New Mexico is a counterproductive proposal which will undoubtedly backfire, by alienating and demoralizing educators even more, and driving them out of the profession, where New Mexico desperately needs them to stay.

Thank you for your time,

Valerie

Valerie Z. Velhagen, MA, LPC, GCDF
College & Career Counselor, Eldorado High School



(505) 296-4871 x35013 | [she/her/hers](#)

[Eldorado Counseling website](#) | velhagen@aps.edu

[11300 Montgomery Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111](#)



From: [P&M Blagrove](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [AFTNMACTION@gmail.com](#); [billie.helean@rrps.net](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: 6.10.5 NMAC Instructional Time Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:15:17 PM
Attachments: [Questions for PED.docx](#)

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Please accept the comments attached on the proposed new administrative 6.10.5 NMAC Instructional Time Requirements

Thank you,

Paula Blagrove

Please accept the comments below sent via email on the proposed new administrative 6.10.5 NMAC Instructional Time Requirements

How can you expect the best outcomes when you push students and staff to the point of exhaustion?

Why are more hours in the classroom always the answer?

NM has been in the bottom five for decades, why the rush mentality now?

Why are teachers potentially being asked to give more time outside of contracted hours to do PD?

Why not put all districts on a 4-day week for students and a 5-day week for staff combined with year-round school?

The PED is under the impression that the way to solve the problems regarding education is more hours in the classroom. Teachers already spend a lot of time inside the classroom outside of their duty day, they do it because it is necessary to get everything done that needs to be done before students arrive in the building. Staff give, give, give while students, parents and the PED do nothing but take, take, take in the sense that they expect staff to be available for questions, meetings, help at any moment of the day; staff does not truly leave their classroom at the end of the day. Students are exhausted by the amount of time they are spending inside each classroom, the amount of time has steadily increased making the average classroom time (for middle school) 50+ minutes per class period. The students are not equipped to stay in one classroom for longer than 45 minutes at a time and that is pushing it, average high school class periods are 40+ minutes.

More hours are not the solution to the educational mess that NM finds itself in and have been for the last 30+ years. Not being from here and having lived and experienced different educational systems NM tries to mimic the bigger states by implementing things that there is no possibility of a positive outcome, the stage is set for failure. NM is a small state with a large rural population many of which may not have completed a high school education; the idea of extended school is “foreign” and perceived as unnecessary.

I am sure that all educators will agree that professional development is important but moving it to outside of contract times is extreme. Have I taken PD outside of contracted hours? Yep, but it was on a topic that I was interested in potentially implementing in my classroom. Teachers are already required to do Safe Schools training which is done outside of the duty day unless we get lucky to be able to do them during our prep if we get it due to sub shortages and meetings. Will our “hourly” rate of pay change to cover the cost of even more time spent outside of our duty day? Increasing the PD hours to sixty is a lot if meetings, conferences, and such are not counted, when exactly will teachers be able to take care of themselves and their families? Teaching is beginning to look like indentured servitude, every time there is a glimmer of success the state comes along and moves the light further into the distance.

If the state was genuinely concerned about student outcomes, they might really consider a complete overhaul of the calendar system regarding the school year. Think about it, the state wants to increase time in the classroom and a 4-day week could be the answer; students attend something like Monday – Thursday for an 7 hour day (or 7.5 including lunch of 30 minutes) with a bit earlier start time there could even be an 8 hour day (7.5 including lunch) which increases classroom time by 30 minutes then staff

works on the 5th day (Friday) to get PD, IEP/504 meetings, conferences, even tutoring if arranged, etc....completed and a 45/15 or even a 50/10 calendar is implemented. There would be less learning loss as students are not sitting at home for large chunks of time. The time both in and out of the classroom would be better utilized and even higher quality.

Why are student engagement and transportation issues not addressed?

Why is slowing down the pace of the curriculum not ever an option?

Student engagement is a significant factor (attendance is on the upswing which is a plus). A student can be in the classroom but not truly “present” in the moment as they do not want to be, there are other things that they want to do. Chromebooks in the classroom are a remarkable thing but they are also a big distraction as the opportunity to play games is available every moment, district IT cannot block everything available to distract students and teachers cannot “catch” everything no matter how diligent.

Transportation shortfalls are a huge factor in educational outcomes. If a student is assigned to ride a bus and the bus cannot get there due to maintenance issues or lack of drivers that is a big issue. Districts have been forced to pull monies from other areas because the state refuses to crack open the wallet to cover the transportation shortfalls that have been occurring for as long as I have lived in NM and the state continues to do nothing; isn't transportation something that is supposed to be addressed due to the Yazzie-Martinez lawsuit? Seems to me that the state is willfully ignoring something that they are required to correct by putting up the proverbial smoke screen.

I find it interesting that the state has not considered the pace at which the curriculum is taught as being a factor for student outcomes. How is a student supposed to grasp a topic if they are doing a new topic every other day (I am looking at you math)? Why did lower levels determine that multiplication is not essential but if they get to it great? How many students have truly had a math disability when the reality is that the teacher was required to go so fast through the material that the student did not have time to grasp the material (the other subjects are not much better, but they have a touch more flexibility). Students are having so much crammed into their brains so fast that they cannot begin to process it all. Giving homework is now frowned upon and students will not do it anyway because it interferes with their lives outside of the classroom, it is okay for them but not for teaching staff.

How can you say there has been little effect when the first semester has not concluded?

Where is the data that shows more hours equals improved outcomes?

Where is the data that shows that classroom time has been cut?

It is interesting that the state believes that there has been minimal effect of the new changes when the first semester is barely ending, where exactly are they getting their information? Where is the data that shows that there has been insignificant effect? Shouldn't the state put up the stats? How has the state determined that classroom time has been cut? Is it based on time schedules? If so, then I could see it as adjustments were needed to be made to accommodate changes in start times and surprise...transportation which was addressed above. If I am not mistaken, the minor cut in times seems to be pointing toward an issue that the state has failed to address and not the individual school districts forced to do the best they can with what they have. Or is it an assumption? If this is the case the state

should ask for clarity before making decisions. I would think that the time “cut” from the schedule would have balanced out due to the earlier start days and later end days which would lead one to speculate where the idea came from? Is the idea coming from the same place that more hours inside the classroom equals improved outcomes? If so, then those that are making decisions are misinformed and therefore cannot make an informed choice. If not and there is data to back up the proposal, then it should be released to the public, so the public is informed. Yet again NM is sticking with their pattern of let us put some tape on the problem within education and hope for the best, but it fails to see that teachers and staff are giving you their best and it is not enough.

Thank you,

Paula Blagrove

From: [Katja Lauterstein](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 rule
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:22:25 PM

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Dear NMPED,

The proposed 180 day increase is really showing a complete tone deafness to the pleas of teachers who are saying we have too much on our plates and we need more support and resources to manage all the things we are facing in our classrooms and communities. If we truly believed these more days would benefit students more than they would hurt us, we would be willing to do it, but where is that data? You're always asking us for data. In fact there is a lot of data that shows the opposite. That shorter days and less school with quality instruction from teachers who aren't overburdened is better or as good.

<https://chartered.college/2021/03/10/a-look-at-the-research-on-extending-school-days-length-of-terms-and-supporting-learning/>

<https://junilearning.com/blog/guide/shorter-school-days/>

And there are many more.

It just really feels like you are piling more onto a vessel that is struggling to stay afloat. Don't you get it? We're beyond maxed out, how many more ways do we have to say it and your answer is to continually ask more of us. It's really become toxic and abusive.

Start listening to teachers for how to make it better. Put that money to things that matter and will make things better for everyone. Or are you asking us to simply work more for the same amount? Teachers are here because we care and we want what's best for children but we can't do that if we're sinking. Please show some sanity and treat us like you care. We are trying to do what's best for a whole generation, but we need your support, not your disrespect. Which is what this decision would be.

Sincerely,

A dedicated teacher who cares about kids and wants to keep doing her job in a field that feels sustainable and respected.

From: [Shawna Austin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:28:30 PM

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Dear NMPED,

I am writing to oppose the rule change request that will adjust the school calendar statewide and impact accreditation. The calendar rule change not only ignores the state statute 22-13-1 and administrative code 6.10.5 it will cause great hardship to my family as a core.

Four day a week school year equates to 1140 hours for all of my children. The Friday off allows my kids much needed rest for their school work but also allows us to make Dr appointments, travel days and family activates. My children have great attendance records due to being able to make arrangements on Fridays and not have to miss instructional class time. Our kids are refreshed and eggar to learn. I feel that they retain more information during our current school schedule.

Please preserve our local decision making ability where our elected school board sets the school calendar for summer and holiday breaks as well as how many day a week school will be. I feel, the rule change will revoke their authority and take it our of our local control.

Thank you,
Lee Austin

From: [Lee & Shawna Austin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:50:41 PM

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

Dear NMPED,

I am writing to oppose the rule change request that will adjust the school calendar statewide and impact accreditation. The calendar rule change not only ignores the state statute 22-13-1 and administrative code 6.10.5 it will cause great hardship to my family as a core. Four day a week school year equates to 1140 hours for all of my children. The Friday off allows my kids much needed rest for their school work but also allows us to make Dr appointments, travel days and family activates. My children have great attendance records due to being able to make arrangements on Fridays and not have to miss instructional class time. Our kids are refreshed and eggared to learn. I feel that they retain more information during our current school schedule.

Please preserve our local decision making ability where our elected school board sets the school calendar for summer and holiday breaks as well as how many day a week school will be. I feel, the rule change will revoke their authority and take it our of our local control.

Thank you,
Shawna Austin

From: [Tricia Guinle](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED rule change for school days
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 6:36:38 PM

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I adamantly oppose the PED rule change. The law (HB 130) that went into effect was a collaborative effort amongst ALL stakeholders in children's education. The varied groups took into consideration adult learning and professional development, the needs of rural communities and their staffing issues, the needs of children and families in order to increase learning. I am sure the PED did not take the careful consideration, or collaborative effort to throw a new rule at teachers, families and school districts.

As a teacher who is given a new curriculum every few years, we need PD to teach that curriculum to the fullest of its extent. For teachers who have to develop curriculum, we need collaborative time to ensure the curriculum meets the standards and the assessments match the learning. To increase the school days does not allow for this adult collaboration or professional development time.

The rule change does not take that into account parent teacher conferences- which is a crucial part of a teacher's job description and duty. It ensures parent participation and is a vital part of creating a community at school. With the new schedules, we are already having difficulty with MLSS monthly meetings, and now you are asking us to do this in our "free time" ? That is unacceptable. Where is the money for this coming from? You cannot afford to pay us for these needed teacher services, and you cannot require it to be done on our personal time.

Teachers need time to think deeply, analytically and reflectively in order to provide robust instruction. We do not need more mandates that are thrown at us on a whim. To improve students' scores, we need support and parent participation. Support can look like fully staffed schools. Support can look like mentor programs for new or new to a district teachers. It can be PD about equity or culturally relevant teaching. Support can look like an interventionist in every school funded by PED, not Title One. We do not have instructional coaches to do observation/ feedback cycles, instead you have burdened administrators to do this- on top of their outrageous workload.

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 keep good, passionate teachers in the classroom.

I was at a Core Team meeting put on by the PED. You talked about how to create transformation in systems. This action you are suggesting is completely contrary to the money and time the PED spent to help CSI schools. We have not have sufficient evidence that these longer days and longer school years improve students' scores. I do have sufficient evidence that it increases teacher burnout.

I adamantly oppose your rule that the PED would like to enforce.

Tricia Guinle

From: [Kristina Sampsel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@union.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC school calendar requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:13:31 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

HB130 was passed and enacted expanding our school year just recently. I am appalled that the PED is proposing a rule change and circumventing the legislature. With all the time, money and people at the table to enact HB 130 and make it happen, why on earth would you make changes at this time? Where is the data to suggest this change is needed? Have you considered the impact of such a large schedule change on family work schedules, employee work schedules and much needed time off for student and employee happiness and wellness?

Respectfully, Kristina Sampsel,

Kristina Sampsel, MOTR/L
3911 Hannett Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Email: x7.kris@gmail.com
Cell: (505) 321-7804

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From: [Meghan Hendricks](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Cc: [Meghan Hendricks; Jesse Hendricks](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:17:38 PM

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To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing regarding 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.

As an APS special education teacher and ATF union member, as well as a parent of two APS students, **I fully support this rule change.**

The APS calendar this year is the most chaotic, illogical, irrational academic calendar I have seen in my lifetime, which includes 40 years as an Albuquerque community member, over a dozen years as an APS employee, four years as an APS parent, and even eight years as an APS student. Only two months of the school year have 20 or more days of school, and last month had a head-scratching, mind-bogglingly inadequate 14 instructional days. More than 6 weeks are "short" weeks and more than 3 weeks have only two instructional days. This throws families into disarray, students suffer from a lack of routine and structure, and teachers are left continually reteaching what no reasonable student is able to retain given so many days off. The most generous way to interpret this ridiculous schedule is that it is pandering to a union that insists teachers are "overworked" and "burnt out" instead of putting students first, which should be at the core of everything we do as educators.

I have never as a teacher spent so little time actually teaching, and I am appalled that the reason is because of such a poorly designed calendar. This irrational interpretation of the legislature's attempt to increase instructional time, once in the hands of Albuquerque Public Schools, somehow resulted in prioritizing teachers over students, unnecessary adult training over child education, and more time "off" for students - the exact opposite of the intention.

The typical reasons the union gives for opposing this change, including a need for more professional development, collaboration time, and preventing burn out, do not reflect the opinion of the majority of teachers, including myself. Suggested talking points sent by the union included the idea that I should complain about "shoulder[ing] the increases of instructional and professional development...but [I] can't continue to do more with less support;" point out that "making unilateral changes to educators' working conditions without [union] input is a proven way to drive educators out of the profession;" and state that "this proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives."

I strenuously object to these complaints. I can continue, and will continue, to do more, because that is what I signed up for when I chose this vocation. As a teacher, I work approximately 50% of the year (fewer than 200 out of 365 days a year). As a professional adult with an advanced degree who has worked in hospitality, banking, and high-tech industries before becoming a teacher, I am more than confident that I can - and would love - to work more frequently than half the year if it would benefit my students, improve my community, and help me provide for my family. This is not a burden to me personally, but a limitation of the current structure of my job (which I chose because I value public education,

and I strive to live my values). This will not cause burn out because working less than half the year cannot possibly be a cause of becoming overworked. This is not a unilateral change or an overreach of executive power, but instead a part of the legislative process that is allowing for ample community feedback. It is most certainly not a disruption to my life as an educator, nor to the lives of my children, APS students, as this year's absurd interpretation of the intent of this law has been. Fixing it will hopefully reduce the disruption we have faced this year!

I prefer a solution-driven approach. The interpretation that teachers need more time for "adult education," professional development, and collaboration time, is a sham. APS teachers in particular have an extensive list of professional development opportunities that take only a small amount of initiative to sign up for. All provide substitute teachers and some provide self-paced online or afternoon (after school, at 4:00 pm, when most professional adults are still at work) options for teachers who prefer not to leave the class during the day. Almost all provide "resource teachers" who not only provide the initial training, but offer many opportunities for collaboration, support, co-teaching, and other research-based methods to help teachers implement the training they receive. When not requested to visit classrooms, help with lesson plans, or provide non-evaluative, feedback-based observations, these resource teachers are waiting for the opportunity to do so, as they often do not have their own classrooms to teach. I have access to more professional development and training than I could possibly ever utilize.

As an APS teacher and union member, the only request I have is to restore, and possibly expand, the time I have for what we call "prep." This is the time I use to collaborate with colleagues, build relationships with students and staff, provide feedback to parents, get feedback from parents, develop and improve lesson plans, prepare materials, grade, analyze data, and organize my classroom. **I was more than happy to give 30 minutes a day of that time to student instruction this year**, and would be extremely happy to gain that time back, if and only if the additional instructional time for students is in place first. I would also respectfully request that the academic calendar prioritizes five day weeks, minimizes short weeks, and provides consistency, routine and structure for our students.

Please institute this rule change that puts students first, learning first, supports teachers, and begins to adjust an outdated structure to a modern world.

Respectfully,
Meghan Hendricks
Special Education Teacher
Albuquerque Public Schools
ATF Union Member

From: [jodi kramer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:18:45 PM

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Please do not add more school time , this is making life harder for my child & myself.
Thank you.

From: [Rebecca Tompkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:37:56 PM

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Opposition to NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"

As educators we are shouldering the increases of instructional and professional development hours implemented this school year. This increase has caused us to lose our essential before and after school prep time. With this implementation of the "bell to bell" schedule, we are now forced to sacrifice our own personal time just to meet the bare minimum standard of having our classes ready when students arrive each morning. We are being asked to provide a service, educating students, without the time to prepare the physical environment for the day. There is not a single teacher at my school who walks in the door with their students, and there is not a single teacher who walks out the door with their students. When we add up all of these minutes alone, it is easy to see the sweet deal the state and the districts have gotten with this new bill... And now you are asking for more.

The changes being proposed will further rob educators of the truly essential time that we need to communicate and collaborate with other educators throughout the school year. This time together builds the essential foundation of each school's community. Without this community there is no collaborative problem solving to address the needs of our students and our school- students will not get the support they need, emotionally or educationally. The proposed changes have a factory-like quality -teachers as singular machines, that when working effectively, press out functional, educated students off the assembly line. This is not what we need, this will not achieve the desired goals. What we need is more humanity and community in our schools to support students and their families.

The students we are seeing in the classroom, especially post-pandemic, bring with them a host of complex issues that impede their ability to learn. Throwing more educational hours at them is not going to change these fundamental issues. Since educators have been back in the classrooms, we have been crying out for training and support to help our students, and their families.

I, like most other teachers, spend countless hours of my personal unpaid time grading, planning, communicating with parents and staff, preparing, and proving my professional skills through the state mandated evaluation system. I sacrifice my personal time because this is what it takes to be an effective educator. At the same time, teaching has become more challenging as students come to the classroom with more complex issues. And once again, more proposed changes by the state to my working conditions. Will this be the tipping point to walk away from the profession I love?

I have two daughters in college, and unfortunately, I am discouraging them from going into education as a profession.

Rebecca Tompkins

APS Itinerant Art Teacher

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From: [Angela Sotelo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Negative impact of going a five day school week.
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:39:13 PM

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I am writing this email on what the negative impact would be of starting a five day school week in the Loving Municipal School district. I feel this will cause attendance issues as most parents/teachers schedule appointments and other business they are needing to take care on Fridays. I myself as a staff member of this district and a parent of students in the Loving school district always plan appointments or anything else I need to take care of on Fridays, this way I am sure to be able to attend to my duties during the week and my children are sure to be in class Monday thru Thursday. With a four day school week we have a high graduation rate with the percentile being at almost 100 percent. Another risk a five day school week poses is the possibility of staff shortage. With the benefit of having a four day work week this district has been able to maintain excellent teachers, some of which travel to work in this district. With a five day school week we are at risk of losing staff. Having a five day school week will also put a strain on my family as well, as we use Fridays to catch up and I do babysit my grandson so my daughter who is a single mother can work the weekends to somewhat support her son and herself. I hope that all this is taken into consideration as the person or persons who are making this decision know that a five day school week is not necessary for our students to be successful and be prepared for their future.

Thank you,
Angela Sotelo

From: [JULIE JOHNSON](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 school day rule proposal
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:58:58 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

I am writing in response to the proposed change requiring all school districts have 180 school days instead of the current 1,140 hour requirement. As a parent of children in Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, our students test higher than most 5 day a week school districts. Our graduation rate is also higher. I believe that in rural areas, a 4 day school week makes sense. Some of our students travel a very long way to school and the 5 day week would be exhausting. It allows families to schedule appointments where kids don't have to miss school. Things in rural New Mexico are going well and I believe our statistics prove it. I hope the PED will reconsider this rule change.

Julie Johnson
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Cherie Widmayer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:59:23 PM

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I am opposed to the rule change for the School Calendar Requirements.

Once again, just when school districts had a glimmer of hope that some degree of local control might be possible, another dictate from the PED in Santa Fe arrives and ends that possibility.

New Mexico is a large, diverse state. What works for students in a big urban district isn't always practical for a small rural community. Community expectation and cultural experiences are as varied in New Mexico as the terrain itself. Each district knows its students and only wants what they know is best for them. When will we learn that the "one size fits all" solution for education doesn't work?

For any change to be successful, the people implementing the change (the PED) need the support of the people who are affected by the change (students, teachers, parents, administrators and community). It appears that with this dictate, the PED left out the critical step of garnering support from the affected groups.

Take some time for meaningful discussions with school districts. There are many issues with this rule change that deserve thoughtful consideration, and the school districts deserve to be part of the discussion.

Cherie Widmayer
Artesia Public Schools

Sent from my iPad

From: [Jenna Luedecke](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Keep 4 Day School Week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:05:48 PM

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I am for preserving the 4 day school week. Thank you, Jenna Luedecke

From: [Kelsi Elkins](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose HB130
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:09:35 PM

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I believe having a four day week has been so beneficial to our kids, the teachers and everyone that is a part of the school system. We are bus drivers in a small rural town and we struggle to find extra qualified drivers as it is, and the 4 day week is a definite perk. Our kids spend more than 2 hours on a bus each day. We absolutely love our 4 day weeks because it allows our kids to be a part of all of our ranching activities without missing a ton of school. We oppose HB130 Please don't take our 4 day weeks from us!

Thanks Kelsi

From: [Robert Peng](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 8:40:34 PM

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To Whom This May Concern,

The recent proposal to increase instructional days to 180 days is unfounded, irresponsible, and hasty.

The correlation between amount of instructional days and student achievement may exist, but does not necessarily mean there is a strong causal relationship. There are also positive correlations with professional development, socio-economic status, geographical region, money invested per student, parent level of educational attainment, and more. An area that serves low socio-economic communities with a teacher shortage and low investment per student will not solve its problems with those few days of extra instructional days. If that is the case, the state may as well follow many international models by instituting six days of school per week with school days starting at 7:00 AM and ending at anywhere from 4:00-6:00 PM. Any marginal, impact of the added days will come at the expense of angry taxpayers. Imagine investing the money in another area of the state that would actually yield stronger results.

Furthermore, the teacher shortage in the state is at a level where additional days would likely discourage people from entering the profession and cause many to leave. The mental toll that the profession already takes along with additional instructional days is not a winning business model. More instructional days with less support and/or less qualified employees will only exacerbate the achievement issues. More classrooms will be filled by educational assistants or substitutes that lack the knowledge or training to effectively teach the classes. Additionally, the advancement process for teachers to finally receive a salary commensurate with the job commitment is a ridiculously flawed system. Forcing a laborious micro-credential program on top of the teacher's duties will absolutely drive teachers out of the profession. What would discourage a teacher from leaving the profession when they can make more in another profession with less time commitment and lower stress levels. How attractive is the system to retaining highly-qualified teachers?

The reality is underperforming students in this state are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. Services for the students are provided by 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.

Please consider these issues before making any hasty changes to the law.

In Teacher Solidarity

From: [Saana Hemingway](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:19:13 PM

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Regarding rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

I am writing as both a teacher and a parent to oppose this rule. Last year I had students miss 20, 30, or more days of school. One student missed 58 days. This year I had a student take a three week vacation during school to visit family overseas. Adding more days to the calendar will not make these students attend more. My own daughter was burned out last year and ended up homeschooling with the advice of her doctor.

I am concerned with adding PD days to the calendar separate from the 180 day. This is for several reasons:

- 1) as a gifted education teacher most PD is not geared for my unique position as a gifted education teacher and case manager. I am not against quality PD but what teachers really need is time embedded into the day to call parents, evaluate student work, and collaborate with coworkers.
- 2) Will teachers be compensated for extra days? If we are contracted to work more days then the contract pay should reflect that.
- 3) My district already offers PD in the summer that is voluntary. Additionally, many teachers work summer jobs or take extra classes in the summer. This needs to be factored in.
- 4) There is a teacher shortage. I am concerned teachers will take more personal and sick days leading to students being taught by subs. Other teachers will choose to leave or retire.
- 5) I have heard students state that if more days are added they will drop out and either go to virtual school or get a GED. Students are already disengaged. More days will not fix this.
- 6) This proposal puts all the focus on teachers but teachers cannot teach students that are not at school or do not want to participate in learning. Parents and students need some accountability.

Instead of more days after school programs and tutoring would be more targeted and allow the flexibility districts need. Please listen to NM teachers and families.

Sincerely,

Saana Hemingway M.Ed.
Gifted education Teacher

From: [Maria Ash](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:48:05 PM

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As a parent of three children currently in their K-12 school years and as a 4th grade teacher, I am against voiding the current calendars which were changed this year to accommodate the 1,140 hours of instruction legislated in HB 130 and signed into law by the Governor's Office. Why?

- 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.
- Please do your due diligence and research what teachers need to succeed. One big one is participating in Profesional Learning Communities (PLC). I have written paper after paper in master classes about PLCs, yet in my district, early release Wednesdays were taken away for elementary school teachers to collaborate and problem-solve in a PLC. Not only does this PED proposal does not include Parent-Teacher conferences, but it also does not include any time for adults to learn together and work together.
- This is a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed. They need support. They need teachers who are healthy, respected, and also supported.
- 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.

Please stop this rule change,
Maria Ash

From: [Christine Sisneros](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No 5 day school week
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 10:09:56 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to voice my disagreement with the proposed rule change forcing school to change from thier current 4 day school week to a 5 day school week. The current school week allows medical appointments to be made without missing school time. This three day weekend allows family quality time, time for reconnecting, time for grounding, time for words of affirmation, time for love and attention without the rush and hustle of the every day school/work demands getting in the way. Studies have shown that the 4 day school week promotes better test scores, better learning environments, higher teacher/staff/student morale, and allows students time to engage in extracurricular activities without drowning into the night trying to keep everything on track. Then there's the issue with funding. Our rural schools make it with what little we get for funding and struggle to provide the beat environments for our children. Where will the additional monies needed for the extra school days proposed come from? There will not be an increase in government funding state or federal. So how do you propose schools accommodate the demand for more days with the same funding that barely scrapes them by now? Cut costs. That's always the answer. But what is the cost to the environment and we'll being of our children? Does the proposed increase benefit them at all? Our schools test in the upper echelon of the state. Why fix what's not broken? Stop pushing your agenda o to our children, onto our families, onto our lives as you do not know them or live them. Leave our schools and our children alone.

Regards,

C. Sisneros

Maxwell Municipal School Parent of Enrolled Students

(Also an alumni and the parent of two graduated Maxwell Bears)

From: [Carla Lehmeier](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Schedule Change
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:32:37 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

The idea to expand the school year will cause many of our best educators to walk away. This years school year schedule is an example considering of someone out of touch. Trying to create more hurtles in the schedule is not the answer!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Katherine Boudreaux](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback KB
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 5:38:35 AM

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Please include educators and parents in these decisions. Many voices and ideas extend beyond those you have considered in this proposal.

I'd like for you to not pass legislation without thoroughly examining feedback from each district and each school within that district before proposing another change.

School districts in APS recently experienced a massive change to the school day and year schedule. If attendance is a concern, by passing legislature parents will not understand until next year, you will further isolate parents, families and young adults by imposing a law that is absent of feedback and cannot be adjusted easily.

We need the ability to make these decisions at each school site, to meet the needs of the families that work, live, and educate within our community. Just as you would hope for your school community. We are happy to adjust to new parameters, but not be so constrained that our communities become excluded from decisions with tremendous impact.

KB

From: [Arturo Munoz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 6:31:51 AM

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

To Whom it May Concern,

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?

Sincerely,
A concerned parent.

From: [Sarah Herman](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Education
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 6:56:23 AM

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The problem with education is not seat time! Stop extending hours and length of the school year. Make New Mexico a place people want to teach. Increase learning opportunities for educators, increase teacher pay, encourage parents to participate in the classroom. Teachers will be leaving the profession if the demands keep increasing without the rewards. Stop gaslighting teachers into thinking it's "for the kids" and start advocating for the professionals in the classroom.

From: [Ashley Sanders-Jackson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:01:28 AM

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Good morning,

I am writing to voice concern about a proposed policy that allows centralized government control over school calendars. Calendaring occurs due to specific cultural needs of communities (e.g. local cultural events, family work schedules, staff needs). It will be difficult for a centralized government entity to appropriately incorporate all of this information to create a calendar for such a diverse state.

Further, creating a precedent to centralize decision making for communities sets a precedent that decision making will devolve into centralized control. Our students and communities are diverse and have varied needs. Though I applaud the goal of creating educational improvements (e.g. 180 school days is a must and requiring a certain number of instructional hours makes sense) allowing school districts to implement these policies in their own ways improves the abilities of communities to meet their own needs. Future policies that set benchmarks for improvement and create interventions when improvements aren't met is a must, but this should be culturally tailored by communities to meet their own needs effectively.

Best,
Ashley Sanders-Jackson (parent in Los Alamos, NM)

From: [Heather Reeves](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:06:13 AM

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The proposed rule by the New Mexico Public Education Department to mandate 180 school days for students exclusive of professional development days and disincentivize districts from including professional collaboration hours as part of their academic calendars is a cause of concern for educators and families. The proposed rule would make it nearly impossible for districts to have a 4-day school week without a waiver granted from the New Mexico Public Education Department. The 4-day school week is very important especially in some rural districts.

The 2023 Legislative Session extended the school year to a minimum of 1140 instructional hours, which included some positives like professional collaboration hours, local flexibility in determining a district's academic calendar, and the preservation of a 4-day school week, which is critical for many rural districts. It is too soon to say that the law has had "little effect".

The proposed rule would mandate 180 school days, which is a change in focus from instructional hours. This means educators will likely end up working closer to 190 days, if not longer. This could lead to teacher burnout and negatively impact the quality of education provided to students. This would also greatly cut down on the summer professional development many teachers attend to improve their practices and teaching.

Professional collaboration hours are an essential component of a teacher's professional development and contribute to the overall quality of education provided to students. Disincentivizing districts from including professional collaboration hours as part of their academic calendars would be detrimental to the professional growth of teachers and the quality of education provided to students.

The proposed rule would also have a negative impact on students and families. The change in focus from instructional hours to school days leads to more school days, which could be detrimental to students' mental and physical health. Longer school years could also lead to students not having the ability to take credit recovery classes that are typically offered in the summer. Additionally, the proposed rule could lead to more students missing school due to family vacations. When students miss school, they fall behind and have poor outcomes.

In conclusion, the proposed rule by the New Mexico Public Education Department would negatively impact the quality of education provided to students, the professional growth of teachers, and the well-being of students and families. It is important to preserve the positives of the 2023 Legislative Session, including professional collaboration hours, local flexibility in determining a district's academic calendar, and the preservation of a 4-day school week, which is critical for many rural districts.

Thank you,
Heather Reeves
APS teacher and parent

From: [Myia Hackett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; atf.union](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School year
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:14:02 AM

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With NO accountability for parents to get children to school, lengthening the school year will do NO good. It just gives students more days to miss. Until our Governor looks to see what other states have done and put in an accountability plan for parents, nothing will change. I moved here from Washington State. They have a Becca Bill that changed the absenteeism rate in WA dramatically! Parents are held accountable and score went up because students are in school every day. We don't need to recreate the wheel. Look at what other states are doing to combat absenteeism!!!

Respectfully submitted,

Myia M Hackett

Cross-cat Teacher

McCollum Elementary School

From: [Cristina Rincon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED; act@atfunion.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Increased days
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:42:15 AM

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

To Whom will decide,

Do lawmakers understand the current challenges in public schools today? The proposal to increase to 180 days, tells me otherwise.

I work in an elementary school that has lost a principal, dean of students, several teachers, a community coordinator and secretary in just one year! Will adding days change this?

Chronic absenteeism is a problem throughout the state. Will adding days change this?

I have many suggestions that I think would improve our reality, but start with voting no to the 180 days proposal.

Then consider the data on four day school weeks (attendance, student success, teacher morale, cost savings...) . Talk to educators about what they feel would improve student attendance and teacher attendance (pay them for the days they don't take - it'll be cheaper in the end and better for students).

As an educator for over 30 years, I implore lawmakers to come out and pay us a visit to discuss the real changes that we need to make.

If I thought 180 days would help anybody (teachers, students, taxpayers...), I'd beg you to vote yes but this is just a grandstanding measure unlikely to improve any of our most pressing concerns.

Sincerely,

Cristina Rincon
Albuquerque Public School Teacher

From: [Allison Dunn](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Lengthening School Year
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 7:58:04 AM

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Dear PED Rep -

Educational reform must be steered by those of us who experience the day-in and day-out work in this field. As a teacher of twenty years, I have seen the public's trust erode - not strengthen - in light of many of the reforms made. While teachers take the charge to differentiate mandated instruction for all learners, no differentiation is made whatsoever to the way we test all kids. We use these single metric, poorly designed testing metrics to make broad, sweeping reforms that often make the learning process less curious, less project-driven, less kid-friendly. Our kids need less time on tech, less time keeping up with every pacing guide, and more time in discussion, in discovery, in experiential learning, in hand's on projects. We must pull our students away from the digital world and into an exciting learning world that is attractive to kids. To this end, teachers MUST have time to collaborate, plan, prepare enriching lessons that will truly engage this generation. Add more to the more-of-the-same is NOT going to produce a different result. This will make the work teachers are doing even harder and you will drive your best educators, those who do go above and beyond to enrich the curriculum in thoughtful, exciting ways, away, as they will have no time or energy to do the work that matters most. Your best teachers care and will leave when they see policy is working against their efforts. Listen to teachers. Follow the letter of the law as it was signed in. Add funds to put more paid adults on our campuses so we can support the kids who need that extra attention.

Thank you,
Allison Dunn

From: [Estefani Hammond](#)
To: Rule.FeedBack@ped.nm.gov; [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against the rule change
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:00:45 AM

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Dear Rule Maker,

First, I find it interesting that we are addressing a Rule Maker and not a Lawmaker concerning something that will impact many people across the state. The proposed rule that would change the School Calendar Requirements is short-sighted and neglects the needs of many New Mexico schools, families, and children. Changes of this magnitude should be discussed and debated by lawmakers that include representatives from those communities that are most affected. To consider such impactful changes without proper debate is at best neglectful governance.

Second, the research on adding days to a school calendar and its effectiveness on education is very mixed and inconclusive. Forcing school districts to add days to a school calendar is not the answer to improving education in New Mexico. Students whose education suffers the most are those who already have attendance issues. Yet, the state has effectively tied the hands of school districts to hold families to task for excessive absences. Therefore, those students with attendance issues would only suffer more from a rule change to increase school days in the calendar. These students will miss more days of school.

Finally, school districts know the needs and wants of their stakeholders and communities. Schools and communities across New Mexico are diverse and have unique challenges and cultures. The proposed rule change forcing more school days into the calendar neglects school districts. If the rule maker wants to add learning hours to the calendar this would be more understandable and workable for districts than adding days. They should be allowed to decide how and when to implement the added instructional time to best serve their students and communities without forcing an arbitrary number of days into the school calendar.

My belief is aligned with the original composer of this email.

Estefani Hammond

From: [Alison Kierst](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: aftnmaction@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:04:35 AM

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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,

Alison Kierst

From: [Donald Johnson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Y'all are so lost!!
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:12:48 AM

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Appointed officials:

What do you actually think adding 4 more days to the schedule will do? I'll tell you...NOTHING!!

More instruction time, more money, more whatever is not going to change anything until the students and parents are somehow held accountable. As a teacher, we bust our butts daily doing the best we can but we are continually let down by leadership because of poor policies or none at all. There is no dress code, no absence or tardy policy, and it is unfortunate but many parents don't care.

Adding 4 days to the APS schedule would mean that I see my students for an extra 3 hours. Please, tell me what subject will get mastered in 3 hours especially for kids that don't care or don't show up.

Adding more time to the schedule is only going to do one thing; cause teachers to leave NM.

Semper Fidelis,
MSgt Donald W. Johnson (Ret)
Eldorado HS MCJROTC
Albuquerque, NM 87111
(505)296-4871 ex-35146

From: [Tejay Zuniga](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule change 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:13:18 AM

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12/13/23

To whom it may concern:

As an educator and parent, I am writing to you regarding the proposed rule change 6.10.5. The proposed rule change 6.10.5 has significant implications for the entire educational landscape, including its impact on student learning and academic outcomes. The change will alter the classroom time and will also negatively affect the depth and breadth of our curriculum. I ask that you keep the extended days as an option for local district control.

The proposed rule change 6.10.5, which would increase professional work hours for teachers, will also impact students' extracurricular activities and students' and teachers' well-being. This change will also impact our family schedules, holiday observances, and community events. I am opposed to this change due to concerns that it does not adequately consider the diverse needs and circumstances of students, educators, or families. The educational landscape is diverse, and any changes to the school year, instructional hours, and professional work hours must be sensitive to this diversity and designed to support the success and well-being of all individuals within the educational community. I implore your careful consideration of the broader societal implications implementation of these changes.

Sincerely,
Tejay Zuniga

From: [Vance Lee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Feedback - 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:21:59 AM
Attachments: [2023-001.pdf](#)

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

Please include this document as feedback for Proposed Rule 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements from Capitan Municipal Schools Board of Education.

Thank you,

J. Vance Lee

Superintendent

Capitan Municipal Schools

575-686-8040 - mobile

575-354-8511 - office

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Capitan Municipal Schools Resolution 2023-01

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

Whereas, the Capitan 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, particularly our esteemed Capitan Municipal Schools;

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 Capitan Municipal Schools, which has effectively operated a full-time 4-day per week schedule for many 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;

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 Capitan 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.

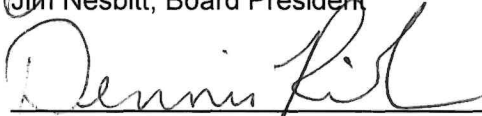
Be It Further Resolved that the Board urges the PED to consider the significant impact of these changes on local communities, the importance of maintaining local control over educational practices, and the need to preserve the unique and successful educational models that have been established in districts 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 11th day of December, 2023 by the Capitan Municipal School District Board.



Jim Nesbitt, Board President

Dennis Rich, Board Vice President

Craig Westbrook, Board Secretary

Dr. Joseph Fraley, Board Member

Wes Hacker, Board Member

From: [Nicole Westlake, SteM](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: AFTNMACTION@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:28:29 AM

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Once again, **the burden is laid upon teachers and schools and not parents who send their children to school unprepared and unengaged in a variety of ways.** The root problems of students falling behind in our school district, is not the teachers, who work tirelessly to help students succeed. Even before the 1140 hours we worked tirelessly, after school, before school, on our weekends and holidays, finding ways to support our students in creative and fun and engaging ways. **The root problems stem from home life and lack of support in their nuclear environments.** If students do not come from homes that are enriching and engaging, the problem of student engagement and the placement of value on Education will NEVER HAPPEN. **Students are being raised in low engagement, low academic environments that teach them to view school as a chore or something they can pick and choose to do or not.** When we acknowledge that parents are part of the problem, then more proactive actions can come to light in terms of student achievement. As it is, teachers are doing all the rowing in a canoe, with thousands of parents not doing any rowing themselves, and the **District not emphasizing enough the importance of parents being engaged with students. The problem with people making decisions from the top are not willing to be honest with themselves about the deeper issues, creating students who cannot read by 4th grade.** It is an exhausting balance for teachers, speaking specifically, about my own experience, to teach grade level content AND teach the ABCs to my 4th grade students. This low academic reality of our students has not changed in 22/23 years of teaching. In fact, it has only gotten worse, and it is not the teachers. It is lack of adult supervision at home, lack of parent engagement, lack of a home culture that values education, and, honestly, lack of English as a home language. I think it is great that we are a bilingual state, and bilingualism does increase the success of learning other languages; it is very beneficial, but when we get students who have parents who do not speak the language, how can they help their children in the school setting? In addition to language barriers, there is a low literacy rate in all of New Mexico.

Adding more hours and days will only maintain the 48% absenteeism because the root problem has still not been addressed.

From: [Dusty Bean](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:41:45 AM

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New Mexico Department of Education,

I am Dusty Bean, I have been an educator in the state of New Mexico for the past sixteen years. I want to let you know my feelings about the newest rule change 6.10.5

This rule establishes criteria for determining the length of a school year and day, instructional hours for students, and professional work hours for teachers; and for establishing a school calendar for the school year.

I am extremely against this rule change. If you don't know, this state is extremely diverse. Smaller schools around the state have a tough enough time paying bills under emergency funding. Adding extra days will raise the operation bill of those districts. Secondly, what will those school districts be forced to do when retired educators who have previously retired from education quit because they don't want to work 5 days a week? The research on the topic of hours vs. days or even four-day weeks vs. five days is extremely mixed. This research also proves that either way works and has benefits.

The bigger problem in our state is attendance. When we fix this issue then we can worry about how many days we go to school. Currently, we have too many students absent already. Furthermore, when we punish those parents who allow their students to miss school should be prosecuted. Again, let's fix this problem first.

Sincerely,

Dusty Bean
Artesia Jr High
Health Educator

From: [Jaclyn Myers-Ulibarri](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Say no to housebill HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:42:23 AM

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The benefits to students attending 4 day school weeks are endless, and proven. We have the data that says our kids are more adapted, well rounded, and capable than students graduating from traditional 5 day schools. This isn't about getting a day off, this is about government overstep, and preventing a ruling that would be devastating to kids on ranches, and reservations. As well as teachers who also travel tremendous distances to provide quality education to NM's "little schools"

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Jaclyn

From: [Pamela Gurule](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Four days to five days rule change, no please
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:44:37 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-jwv0ponn.png](#)
[Outlook-wpi4sjcw.png](#)
[Outlook-q010wbgt.png](#)
[Outlook-0wlmny5j.png](#)

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To whom this may concern,

I totally agree with the statement below. A four-day week is beneficial for our community.

"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."

Thank you for considering and respecting our communities wishes and concerns by allowing us to keep our traditional four-day week school calendar.

Regards,

*Pamela Gurule
Elementary Special education teacher/Case manager
Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools
PO Box 309
Ojo Caliente, NM 87549
(505) 583-2316 ext. 1302
Pamela.gurule@mesavista.org*

"TELL ME AND I FORGET.
TEACH ME AND I REMEMBER.
INVOLVE ME AND I LEARN."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



"NINE-TENTHS OF EDUCATION
IS ENCOURAGEMENT."

ANATOLE FRANCE



"All students can learn
and succeed, but not in
the same way and not in
the same day."

WILLIAM G. SPADY



"GOOD TEACHING IS 1/4
PREPARATION AND
3/4 THEATRE."

GAIL GOLDWIN



From: [Renee Pena](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Ruling
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:50:38 AM

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My name is Renee Pena, and as a teacher at a rural school, 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. What works for urban schools does not work for rural schools. Our villages are spread out in the mountains of northern New Mexico and some students are on the bus since 5:30 am to arrive at school in time. In order to support and commit to the success of the Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools I strongly **DO NOT** recommend the proposed changes to **6.10.5 NMAC** (School Calendar Requirements) as well as **6.19.4.1** (Accreditation Procedures). Thank you.

From: [Caleb Alcon](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] please no Monday school
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:51:28 AM

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My dad gets me a ski pass ever year and if i have a doctors appointment i can only ski one day a week and we have a good education with four days a week please dont give us five days a week

From: [Tammy Garcia](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Educators Matters
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:54:34 AM

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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.

--

Tammy García

Adobe Acres E.S.

Phone: 877-4799

Fax: 877-8533

From: [Ainsley Esquivel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 day school days
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:56:44 AM

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Dear New Mexico P.E.D

I would not want to have an 5 day school weeks.I play sports and sometimes we get back to Eagle Nest at 11:00-12:00.We also have ski team and we go up to the mountain on mondays and teach kids how to ski and they can have a chance to get better so then another day they can go and ski with their friends.Alot of people schedule their appointments on monday so than people can stay happy and healthy.Living in this beauty of this winter wonderland that we live in to have fun and stay happy.But if we have 5 day weeks then a lot of our things with get shut down.

Sincerely an Eagle Nest student

From: [Collin Copening](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] no monday school
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:59:25 AM

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I think we shouldn't have monday school because we can go skiing and talk to our family and spend time with our familys.

From: [Ransom McDaniel](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No Monday School
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:59:41 AM

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I think there should not be monday school because of the s ki team because there is only a ski team on monday and skiing with friends.

From: [Elizabeth Owens](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Quit changing things (for worse)!!
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:59:42 AM

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- Quit adding hours and adding school days, as an educator of 23 years, I find that will end up being the straw that breaks my camel's back - so to speak. I will retire and you will lose good, well experienced teachers, such as myself!!
- 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.

From: [Terry DuBois](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] do not change time in schools
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:07:46 AM

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As a retired educator from Los Alamos, I believe the proposed changes to the calendar are not productive towards bettering our educational system. I was an elementary reading coach and realize the attention span of children is limited and lengthening the school day will only produce poor results. We would be better off supporting our teachers and staff as better teachers make better students. I feel that many teachers and staff are going to quit teaching if this is passed. How in the world can we possibly fill the already critical teacher shortage if we usher out the ones we have now. Please let each district decide what works best for them. I think Los Alamos has a fine system and should be allowed to make decisions based on what is best for our community. I am very disappointed to hear this is even being considered. Thank you.

Teresa DuBois
505 470 8436
Los Alamos NM

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: [Sandra Mack](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd:
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:09:32 AM

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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 express my very strong concerns about the proposed rule on instructional time requirements (6.10.5 NMAC) and respectfully request the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) revoke the 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. I know the department is trying to enhance educational outcomes, but it is more appropriate to allow the new reforms, which properly went through the legislature, time to be assessed for efficacy, rather than imposing new rules that will create further administrative and staffing burdens on schools in what seems to be a constant state of frenzied, poorly implemented change.

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.

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 school calendar. Some of the state’s highest-performing schools are on 4-day calendars. 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.

In effect, the new proposed rules would give teachers less planning and collaboration time, which would impact the quality of education and the retention rate of teachers. I personally doubt whether the rule would then result in better student outcomes.

Lastly, PCSNM has 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. This is a MUCH more significant problem that we schools are getting inadequate support on. 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. PLEASE change your focus now to student absenteeism. Perhaps New Mexico could implement tax penalties for absenteeism, as California has done.

I urge the PED to reconsider the proposed rule and focus on leading New Mexico’s communities in getting our kids to school on a regular basis. It is those absentee kids bringing down our scores. Dropping the proposed rule would somewhat reduce the insane pace of administrative change currently required of schools, which I believe is stressing administrators and reducing their focus on teaching quality and student outcomes.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I strongly believe that this rule is counterproductive to improving student outcomes in New Mexico

Yours sincerely,
Sandra Mack

--

Sandra Mack
Math & Science Department Chair
Amy Biehl High School

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Sandra Mack
Math & Science Department Chair
Amy Biehl High School

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From: [Sarah Parker](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Regarding a mandatory 5 day School week
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:10:09 AM

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

Hello Representatives,

I am writing to you regarding the mandatory increase of school week to five days. I am a teacher in Red River, I live in Sunshine Valley. I can understand that an increase in days may sound like something that would help our kids, but I disagree. For rural schools a four day school week is necessary for staff and families to take care of doctors appointments and other tasks to maintain our lives. I believe that rather than more school days we would benefit from more funding to have more aids in the classroom.

My life is spent driving back and forth to work. I teach all day and have to have a day for doctors appointments. My school has one substitute and we are short a teacher. If I take off one day, which is what it takes to go to town or to Santa Fe or ALbuquerque for any specialist, it puts undue burden on the school. I use out one weekday for my doctors appointments. Our families do the same thing. The state is so worried about absenteeism but you would force absenteeism to increase with a 5 day school week.

Like myself there are families who drive an hour one direction every morning and evening to get to and from school. Rural living is real. I can afford to live where I am because it is far from a town center. I would not be able to afford to live in a town center because of the increase in real estate pricing. Families live rurally because they farm or ranch or maintain a more traditional lifestyle. The four day week allows people to live where we live and maintain thier culture.

I feel like I have to convince you that life is difficult so that you will not vote to expect all New Mexicans have the same lives and experiences. We are a unique state in that we have rural schools that function. You can not expect a rural school to function like a school in Taos or Albuquerque where parents can get to school quickly, take a child to an appointment and have them back, or that a teacher could take off for an appointment at lunch, none of this is his is not possible. In rural areas its a days commitment to do anything outside of the area.

Please address the root causes of many of our issues. We need parents to have more access to higher education, the lottery addresses this. We need parents to have more access to food and basic needs. We need parents to have access to more substantial jobs than just the service industry, so that it's easier to survive. We need more access to educational aids in the school. At Red River we have level 3 and level 2 teachers, thankfully NM pays us well, but this takes money away from aids. Just because a teacher has more experience in education does not mean that we do not need more aids. We need more staff, help us with that.

A five day school day will push several of our staff out of the teaching profession. Teaching is hard. It takes energy and time. It is physically and emotionally draining, losing the day that we can have appointments and take care of ourselves would push many of us over the line, I am included in this. We have been struggling for the last 3 years to find teachers at our school. Pushing teachers out will destroy a school and it will leave a huge hole in the community. I am

sure that we are not the only school facing this issue.

Please feel free to call me for any clarification.

Thank you,

Sarah Parker

575.770.0424

From: [Patrick McElwee](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:18:55 AM

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December 12, 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"

NM PED Policy Division:

Please accept the below comments on the proposed new administrative "6.10.5 NMAC, Instructional Time Requirements":

I am submitting this letter in strong opposition of the proposed revisions to the New Mexico Public Schools Instructional Time Requirements.

Some Facts: In 2018 Judge Singleton ruled in *Martinez/Yazzie v. State of New Mexico* the state has failed to provide all students with a sufficient education as required by our state's constitution. Further the ruling specifies multiple areas of failure at the state level:

- Quality Pre-K/K-3 Plus
- Small Class Sizes
- Extended Learning
- Sufficient funding for teacher recruitment, retention and training
- Culturally and Linguistically relevant education
- Dual Language
- Social Services

To date, inexplicably, the highest priority has been for legislators and the governor to push a misguided, ill considered and septic focus on extended learning.

Extended time is not merely "extra time" or "more time", though that has been what has been legislated. There is no research to back the idea that simply more time in a failing school system equals a "sufficient education". To be clear, this myopic focus on increased time has no evidence to support the hope that it will improve any learning outcomes or address the constitutional violation that the state continues to find itself promulgating.

The proposed rule would further narrow the parameters of the law to force every school district to go beyond how the law was written. The rule would effectively mandate that districts merely add days and blatantly disregard their community's needs by eliminating the flexibility that the law was written to allow.

This is not only a bad interpretation of an already bad law, but indeed supersedes it and disregards the actual language of the law. This is not what the NMPED's role is. PED's role is to provide clarification in instances where the law is not sufficiently clear. This is not the case with this already misguided legislation. To narrow the scope or create requirements that the legislature did not adopt in the first place goes beyond NMPED's jurisdiction.

More importantly though, the entire misinterpretation of "extended learning time" as simply "more time", is counter to the ruling in *Yazzie/Martinez* and the legal redress necessary to be in compliance with the ruling. In many ways this more time "solution" is an

affront to the *Yazzie/Martinez* ruling. New Mexico has a failing school system, the 6 other areas at the core of this issue (enumerated above), have not been addressed, let alone sufficiently.

The legislature's and governor's actions seem to say: "We have a failing school system that has been ruled legally insufficient. Our solution is to force students to experience MORE time in this failing system." It would be absurd, if not for the tragic consequences of such fallacious reasoning.

I implore you to truly utilize the vast expertise that exists in this state and country. Do not "reinvent the wheel". Instead, utilize strategies that have worked and are working across the nation, such as moving to 4 day school weeks for all children, more professional development and planning days for teachers and adopting literacy strategies that actually work (Mississippi of all places is putting NM to shame in this regard, we could learn from them among others).

This rule should not be adopted and should not have even been proposed. Do not continue to double-down on bad policy that ultimately undermines the other areas the state has been found to be in constitutional violation of regarding our children's education.

Patrick McElwee, MFA

NM Level III Instructional Leader

Teacher of the Gifted

Eldorado High School Instructional Council Chair

ATF Union Rep.

From: [Joshua Dietz](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfuniion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.5.10 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:24:01 AM

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

Good morning,

I am emailing about the 2024-2025 School Calendar. I do not think adjusting it is going to fix the problems that educators face in the classroom everyday. If this passess there will be a larger shortage of teachers because no one is wanting to make the changes you want to make. We have so much on our plates and yet you want to add more on it by not giving us PD days or making us stay after our hours to have PD to fulfill your 60 hour requirement. Also PED does not support teachers like it needs to with the schedule that is happening this year and yet you want to make it more ridiculous with no support for the teacher. If PED truly supported their teachers and the well being of students then there would not be such a huge shortage of teachers in New Mexico. PED expects us to get all of our work done within the contract hours yet they bombard us with more and more work to the point that teachers have to stay late outside of our contract hours. to get the work done. This change does not help anyone at all and I hope that you take this into consideration. I also hope that you truly take this into consideration when you are making the decision and not blowing us off when we are the ones that are in the classrooms everyday. Thank you and I hope you have a great day!

Joshua Dietz
5th Grade teacher
Sandia Base Elementary School
505-268-4356

From: [Becky Argo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extra days
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:24:18 AM

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To whom it may concern,

As a math teacher and a mother, I am against adding the proposed days. Requiring more days does not seem to be a viable solution for student success. I have listed things that I think would be beneficial to public education.

I would suggest more instructional aides. I have been teaching for 17 years and the need for more individual and small group instruction has probably doubled over those years. I have so many more ELL, MLSS, 504 and IEP kids. Sometimes when I pull out for small group intervention it is more than half my class. Our school has 1 teacher's aide to split between 2, 8th grade classes that are not inclusion classes.

I would also suggest hiring more qualified teachers. Smaller class sizes are directly linked to student success and yet my classes this year are larger than they've ever been.

Another suggestion is to have bilingual assistance. I have kids in my class that don't speak English and they are supposed to learn algebra from me.... How? We have an ELL teacher that helps them each day with English for 2 class periods but then they must do the rest of their classes without her. Having an interpreter or some kind of help in math, history and science would be so amazing for those kids.

It wouldn't hurt to have more school social workers and counselors either. We have kids at our school who can't figure out if they are a boy or a girl but somehow you think they will be able to focus on the school subjects. These kids have so many emotional problems that learning math or English is the last thing on their minds.

One of the biggest issues I have is attendance. There needs to be some way to hold parents accountable for their kids missing school. There is a direct correlation with failing grades and attendance. The kids who don't come to school, don't have good grades and adding 10 more days for those kids just means they would miss that much more school and be even further behind. They are not interested in school and their parents aren't interested in making sure they're here.

As a parent of a 16-year-old boy, he needs a break from school and all his activities. He already spends every morning of July at school for preparation for upcoming school activities. He needs time to have some real-life experiences. For example: go on hikes, go fishing, swimming, get a summer job, go on a vacation, sleep in, deep clean the house, mow lawns, visit family from other towns, and so much more.

As for my personal health and well-being I feel strongly that this would negatively affect my state of mind, causing more frustration and more burn-out. Also, a little angry thinking about the fact that I finally got a nice pay raise only to find out you are trying to make me work more days so it wouldn't be a raise at all.

Please don't just push your agenda. Try to think about some alternative options to increase student

success while focusing on the many diverse students we teach.

Becky Argo
Artesia Public Schools

From: [Jessica Meyer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The demands of a teacher
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:26:40 AM

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I hope you take the teacher's opinions into consideration. I don't think people realize how hard teacher's work. On top of teaching full classes, with different learning styles, different learning levels, and different behaviors, we also have to plan and prepare lessons (45 min prep is not enough, so we end up working off contract). We also communicate with parents (some difficult), grade papers, and implement a curriculum that we don't get enough training on (1 day, a week before the school year starts?), so we must learn on our own after school hours. We also have to put up with the demands of the school district (testing, observations, PDP's etc.) and the PED. We have to dig into our own pockets to provide the basic classroom necessities for our students because our economically disadvantaged families struggle to help (that is the case for most of the schools). We even spend our own money to provide students the opportunity to create crafts around the holidays for themselves and their families to enjoy. We do all of this because we love our students! That is why we become teachers. But that doesn't mean we should be taken advantage of because of our passion for teaching. The expectations can be too much, which causes teachers to retire early or change careers. We need time to breathe sometimes and spend time with our second families, because our students and coworkers are usually our first family, we see them more. We also need time to recharge, changing the calendar every year should not be an option. We are like a rubberband, there is only so much we can stretch before we snap.

--

Thank you,

Jessica Meyer
Teacher, 5th grade General Ed
La Mesa Elementary School
7500 Copper Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
505-262-1581
Jessica.Meyer@aps.edu

From: [Katelyn Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] dear state
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:27:46 AM

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i think that we should not have 5 days of school because we have ski team and that even though some of our parents have work on monday i take the time to go to my grandparents and spend time with them.

From: [Jessica Meyer](#)
To: aftnmaction@gmail.com; [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The demands of a teacher
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:46:52 AM

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

To Whom it May Concern,

I hope you take the teacher's voice into consideration. I don't think people realize how hard teacher's work. On top of teaching full classes, with different learning styles, different learning levels, and different behaviors (sometimes different grade levels), we also have to plan and prepare lessons (45 min prep is not enough, so we end up working off contract). We also communicate with parents (some difficult), grade papers, and implement a curriculum that we don't get enough training on (1 day, a week before the school year starts?), so we must learn on our own, after school hours. We also have to put up with the demands of the school district (testing, observations, PDP's etc.) and the PED. We have to dig into our own pockets to provide the basic classroom necessities for our students because our economically disadvantaged families struggle to help (that is the case for most New Mexico schools). We even spend our own money to provide students the opportunity to create crafts or projects year round for themselves and their families to enjoy. We do all of this because we love our students! That is why we become teachers. But that doesn't mean we should be taken advantage of because of our passion for teaching. The expectations can be too much, which causes teachers to retire early or change careers. We need time to breathe sometimes and spend time with our second families, because our students and coworkers are usually our first family, we see them more. We also need time to recharge, shortening the summer or changing the school calendar every year should not be an option. Give us time to adapt to a new change before you say "it's not working" or "what else can we try." Teachers are like a rubberband, there is only so much we can stretch before we snap.

Thank you,
Jessica Meyer
Teacher, 5th grade General Ed
La Mesa Elementary School
7500 Copper Ave NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
505-262-1581
Jessica.Meyer@aps.edu

From: [Becca Moore](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:51:37 AM

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Please consider how many fewer educators you will have in an already short-staffed system next year if you implement these changes, not to mention how many students you will lose to private schools and charters (aka money) as well as other points below:

- 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.

From: [Dakoda Gandert](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dear state P.E.D
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:52:23 AM

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I think we shouldn't have monday school because most of our parents are used to us not having monday school they also might have work on that day we also have sports like basketball,volleyball,track. or activities like skiing (ski teams also) hiking or our family might not be able to bring us to school and we already have to go to school till 4:03 so we shouldn't have to do it for more days then we already do.

From: [Hunter Williams](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:53:39 AM

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hello in hunter williams and i dont want to have 5 days every week because i only get to see my dad on monday and he workes the rest of the week so i can only see my dad on monday so please dont take away monday

From: [Braylen Boykin](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] This is why we need to stay a 4 day school week and is PROVEN by scientist just lisen
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:55:47 AM

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Scientist has proven that people with mondays off are more active and there brains moving and are "awake" and it is proven people have things to do on mondays and my dad he was in the military and lets just say... yea he got blown up 1 or 2 times and he has a bad back and I have to help im stack wood on sundays and mondays and people like to ski on mondays and if people are not skiing on mondays then lets be real... yall are not making any money and the government needs that money right? so before you make any changes lets think about it first.

From: [Jason Rice](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:13:29 AM

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Hello,

I am a parent of a student (sophomore) and a teacher (4th year as a teacher) who are currently attending a school with a 4-day school week. We have talked about the benefits of the 4 day schedule as well as cons. However the benefits far out weigh the cons. Benefits include being able to schedule healthcare appointments without having to miss a school day or have to take a personal day of work and have a substitute teach your class (which I believe in some areas are on very short supply). Having a 4 day week also helps students stay motivated and focused more when they are at school.

I vote against doing away with giving the schools the option to have a 4 day week schedule. I think more research is needed and I also feel like attendance and academics should be reviewed prior to changes being made. I would be willing to bet that both of those are going to be reflected higher in a 4 day school bs a 5 day school.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Stephanie Rice
Concerned Parent

Sent from my iPhone

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: [Kara Crow](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] School days
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:19:29 AM

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

As a parent of small town 4 day school week students, I can tell you this has been the best thing for them. Let me share our personal story, my son just graduated in May and last Thursday he finished his associate degree in automotive mechanics. He is a typical boy who does not enjoy school, however, with the 4 day school week he was able to start working in a mechanic shop on Fridays (his sophomore year) learning from a mechanic with over 40 years of experience and he found his passion. Had he not had this opportunity he may still not know what he wants to do in life and he definitely would not have a college education completed at the age of 18. As you know many kids change their minds in college, probably because they did not get to have this type experience and they at age 20 still have no idea what their passion is. This opportunity of working Fridays (especially for boys) may seem insignificant, but for my son it made a huge difference. I know he is not the only one, the school makes it a point along with the community to work together and give kids these types of opportunities. These kids need life lessons and they are not solely taught in the walls of the schools. Let our school choose what is best for our kids.

Btw. This setup gave him a goal to work for and it made him do better in his high school classes. He graduated in the top 5 in his class and was the only boy with a 4.0 through out high school.

Thank you for your time

Kara Crow

575-309-8246

Please feel free to call with any questions or if I can do anything else to help.

From: [Jacqueline Olea](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I'm in Support of the New Mexico Schools Superintendents' initiative on NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements" & challenging PED in Silver Consolidated Schools
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:27:20 AM

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

To Whom it May Concern:

As a parent and a former student of Silver Consolidated Schools, I stand firmly behind our Board in their decision to denounce the PED's rule regarding the 4-day school week. Cliff School is doing well, there are many other issues the PED needs to address in our school systems before removing a schedule that actually works.

Sincerely,
Jacqui Olea

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kendall Taylor](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:27:22 AM

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

Secretary Romero and PED staff,

These comments are in relation to the PED Administrative Rule being proposed- 6/10/5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements:

Well, here we go again. The PED, under the guidance of Secretary Romero, has decided by administrative fiat to ignore the rule of law and the workings of democracy to institute its own misguided mandate increasing the number of days students and teachers are to be in school. The goal is laudable. Everyone wants NM students to learn effectively and to have access to bright futures. However, the method is disingenuous and problematic.

Secretary Romero has stated in the press that H.B. 130, the fully debated and vetted and democratically voted upon resolution governing time spent in school, has failed because after only 4 months, nothing has changed. His argument for the administrative rule is "How can this not be a good thing?" I will tell you how. Research has shown that extended time in school can be beneficial to students, but only if certain other requirements are met. There is no statistical correlation between longer days or more days in school and student achievement without supplemental support. There is only a statistical correlation (and it is a small correlation) if, and only if, schools also implement these supplemental supports, such as smaller class sizes, intervention teachers, fully staffed schools with a full complement of social workers, nurses, OTs, PTs, SLPs, and counselors, time for educators to collaborate and learn themselves, and the provision of strong curriculum. In addition, the gains made for students in an extended year are from impoverished students rather than the student population as a whole. This is no surprise. We have known explicitly that poverty has negative effects on the educational outcomes of impoverished students since the Coleman Report in the mid 1960s and we have understood this anecdotally long before that. As an example of how days in school are not necessarily a panacea to school improvement, we have only to look at the school ranking that comes out every year or at the annual NAEP scores. Of the top 10 scorers on the NAEP, only three states have a mandate for 180 days, the others being shorter or up to the discretion of the school district. In addition, all of them require less hours of schooling per year than does NM. If we look at the national rankings as a whole, the top three states all have a shorter number of hours of school per year than does NM. There is no correlation between days in school and test scores. Their scores beat ours due to the supplemental support being provided. Implementing this rule absent any support for or plans to mitigate the effects of poverty in New Mexico is short sighted at best and maliciously politically expedient at worst.

Beyond the problematic reasoning behind the administrative rule lies an ongoing matter that has caused grief across the school districts of the state. Rather than listen to the collective knowledge and institutional experience of teachers actually in the classrooms, this administrative rule follows a pattern of top down "reform" which discounts the workforce and their needs. Union locals have been asking for supports for our schools, such as those mentioned above, for decades and yet we have been ignored. Every year there are new

administrative requirements for teachers to deal with in addition to our teaching load and we are ignored. The legislature or the PED stumbles upon a new idea and decides that it will be the

thing that saves education and the implementation falls on teachers. Dyslexia screening, the reintroduction of the reading wars and LETRS training, SEL teaching, new grading systems, learning a new curriculum that promises to solve educational problems every few years, the lingering effects of COVID (emotional and academic), arbitrary changes to our work day and our school year, increased numbers of standardized tests, shifting evaluation procedures, and one size fits all district PD has all taken its toll on educators. We are tired and fed up. We are tired of being disrespected, we are tired of our knowledge and expertise being ignored, and we are tired of being cast as the scapegoat for society's ills and the lab rats for experimentation. Yet, we show up to work every day and do our best for our students, our families and our communities. But our patience and our endurance are not unlimited. In a state already struggling with teacher shortages and a dearth of substitute teachers, putting more straw on the proverbial camel's back is unwise. Teachers will quit. Schools will suffer. Children will lose educational opportunities. All of this will be in the name of an under-researched, ill thought-out, needless administrative rule designed to do nothing more than bolster the "reformy" image of our Secretary of Education and the PED.

I implore you not to institute this rule and put effort instead into solving the many real problems that educators have been speaking about for years.

Yours in frustration, Kendall Taylor, Ph.D.

From: [Mary Carpenter](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 180 day change
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:27:35 AM

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

Hello!

I feel very strongly against changing the day count to 180 days. This would not have any benefit for the students. They would get a lot more benefit from hiring more support staff such as counselors, nurses, TAs, reading specialists, and more support teachers. Instead of stretching the teachers you have even more thin, please consider a different solution to this problem. Some items to consider:

- 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.

Please do not implement this change.

--

Mary Carpenter
(She/Her)
SPED Math & Science Classroom Teacher
Digital Innovator
mary.carpenter@aps.edu

From: [Samantha Ashby](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule change for 180 day school year
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:29:17 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'm writing in opposition to the proposed rule change that would void the current calendars legislated in HB 130. As educators, we have already shouldered the increases in instructional and professional development hours that were implemented this year. This is a false solution to a complex problem. Our students are affected by chronic health conditions, mental health issues, disabilities, poverty, abuse and neglect. We need more funding for support services with expertise in working with these complex issues, not simply adding more seat time as a band-aid. Smaller class sizes and decreasing work loads for educators by providing more support would make a difference in students' education. Changing law through rule is unacceptable and an overstep of the executive branch and will lead to educators leaving the profession in an increasingly understaffed workforce.

Sincerely,

Samantha Ashby

School Counselor and Parent

From: [Mary Carpenter](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:30:30 AM

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

Good Morning,

I feel very strongly against changing the day count to 180 days. This would not have any benefit for the students. They would get a lot more benefit from hiring more support staff such as counselors, nurses, TAs, reading specialists, and more support teachers. Instead of stretching the teachers you have even more thin, please consider a different solution to this problem. Some items to consider:

- 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.

Please do not implement this change.

--

Mary Carpenter
(She/Her)
SPED Math & Science Classroom Teacher
Digital Innovator
mary.carpenter@aps.edu

From: [Michael Jamison](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Request to Revoke Proposed Rule on Calendar Reform
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:31:58 AM

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

I am writing to strongly request that the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) rescind the instructional time proposal (6.10.5 NMAC).

This proposal will negatively impact dozens of schools in our state and many of the proposed components are extremely short-sighted.

Please listen to schools' individual concerns and don't rely on blanket policy that harms a multitude of schools throughout our state.

Sincerely,

Michael Jamison

From: [Connie Ward-Rowland](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:39:31 AM

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

My name is Connie Moon Rowland from House, New Mexico. I want to tell you some of the great things about the 4 day a week of school for House NM.

They started this in the 80's for House. My 3 kids went to school there. One of the reasons we went to this plan was it ***saved utilities, time and gasoline.***

The bus drivers drove so many miles a day. We lived 20 miles from school, one way and some families lived up to 70 miles away and would be on the bus for hours. Less gasoline and wear and tear on the buses were used to drive these great distances by cutting out one day of driving. (The roads were really rough then and are not much better today).

It saved on the utilities of the school, only having to heat or cool the building 4 days a week vs 5 days a week. It saved on the food bill for the Cafeteria.

It saved the teachers from driving back and forth, as they drove great distances too. We got the required hours by starting earlier and staying later.

As for doing after school activities, it saved those participating from having to drive back and forth, again saving gasoline and time.

Most of the families in the House area were not town people and traveled a great distance to get to school.

We tried to make doctor and dentist appointments on Fridays so the student would not miss so much school.

This plan really works well for the rural school districts, so I ask you to not take that away from the rural school districts. Thank you for considering this request.

Connie Moon Rowland
2217 Putnam Dr.
Clovis, NM 88101

From: [Nicole Westlake, SteM](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:43:16 AM

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

Once again, **the burden is laid upon teachers and schools and not parents who send their children to school unprepared and unengaged in a variety of ways.** The root problems of students falling behind in our school district, is not the teachers, who work tirelessly to help students succeed. Even before the 1140 hours we worked tirelessly, after school, before school, on our weekends and holidays, finding ways to support our students in creative and fun and engaging ways. **The root problems stem from home life and lack of support in their nuclear environments.** If students do not come from homes that are enriching and engaging, the problem of student engagement and the placement of value on Education will NEVER HAPPEN. **Students are being raised in low engagement, low academic environments that teach them to view school as a chore or something they can pick and choose to do or not.** When we acknowledge that parents are part of the problem, then more proactive actions can come to light in terms of student achievement. As it is, teachers are doing all the rowing in a canoe, with thousands of parents not doing any rowing themselves, and the **District not emphasizing enough the importance of parents being engaged with students. The problem with people making decisions from the top are not willing to be honest with themselves about the deeper issues, creating students who cannot read by 4th grade.** It is an exhausting balance for teachers, speaking specifically, about my own experience, to teach grade level content AND teach the ABCs to my 4th grade students. This low academic reality of our students has not changed in 22/23 years of teaching. In fact, it has only gotten worse, and it is not the teachers. It is lack of adult supervision at home, lack of parent engagement, lack of a home culture that values education, and, honestly, lack of English as a home language. I think it is great that we are a bilingual state, and bilingualism does increase the success of learning other languages; it is very beneficial, but when we get students who have parents who do not speak the language, how can they help their children in the school setting? In addition to language barriers, there is a low literacy rate in all of New Mexico.

Adding more hours and days will only maintain the 48% absenteeism because the root problem has still not been addressed.

From: [Felicia Sena](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:45:02 AM

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

Good morning,

I am an educator with 20 years of experience and I am strongly oppose adding more school days to the calendar. More days is not the answer. We need to support our families financially and with resources for food, utilities, day care, and after school programs. As educators we can only do so much and you want to add even more to our already full plates. If you go forward with this you will increase teacher burn-out and have another increase in retirements. Teaching is one of the most time consuming, stressful, multiple split second decision making careers out there. We need the normally scheduled breaks to mental and physically decompress and to have some time to get our homes in order and spend time with our families, all of which take a back seat to our career because we are working hard to positively impact the education of children. Where is the data to prove more days in school positively impacts students? Some Albuquerque Public School recently piloted longer days and more days of attendance. They weren't able to provide data to show that it positively impacted students and their learning. In addition, the district is no longer doing so after this year. Before, adding more days focus on families and supporting them directly.

Sincerely,
Felicia Sena
(505) 459-6744
6217 Cole Ln SW
Albuquerque, NM 87105

From: [Cody Patterson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Proposed PED regulation 6.10.5
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:49:30 AM

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

Committee Members,

I would like to bring to the attention of the committee several issues and questions regarding the proposed PED regulation 6.10.5. State law indicates that local school districts have the ability to design their own calendars as long as we meet the minimal 1140 hours. In small rural districts there are many reasons that the 4-day week needs to stay in place as it is currently in law. Many families in rural districts need a day a week that they can travel to doctors' appointments, stores, banks, etc as many of our small communities do not have this access within their town. Some of these amenities are an hour or more away. Due to this having these schools go to 5 days a week would increase the absentee rate. Having a 4-day week gives small rural districts an equitable recruiting field for hiring and retaining teachers. Many of the 4-day week schools scored traditional, spotlight or higher following the law of 1140 hours and accomplishing this in a 4-day week using NMPED metrics. It is also important to mention that this would be at least a 20% cost increase in transportation, 20% cost increase in food service and 20% cost increase in utilities. In our school district we do Friday College. This is set up so that our students can attend in person college (Dual Credit) at ENMU-R. Also, I have heard in many venues that this new rule was built together with schools. To my knowledge there has been no collaboration on any of these topics with the superintendents or its association. Therefore, being done with philosophy instead of a work with philosophy.

In the Public-School code (22-2-8.1) minimum number of instructional hours, it does NOT include instructional days. In a time when equity (not equal) is important with the statements included above, how does this create an equitable educational experience for each individual community? When there was bi-partisan support for creating the law of minimal 1140 hours, how is adding the minimum days and the one size fits all approach legal? Where is the research that adding days will improve attendance and achievement? In the information provided above it has already shown that it will create more attendance issues not lower them. My recommendation is to allow districts the "equity" that each community needs to develop the calendar that best fits their school and community and stay with the law indicating the minimum of 1140 hours. We have not even accomplished one year under this law to show what schools are doing to improve.

In the Public-School Code (22-2-8.1) the law also includes the importance of professional development to be included in part of the instructional day. The new regulation requires that the minimum days be exclusive of teacher professional work hours. This would increase the total number of days so that staff could receive professional development and participate in PLC's. In a field that is high stress and already feels like a 24-7 occupation, adding these days will be detrimental to teacher retention. The majority of teachers use their personal time to grade papers, complete reports, and contact parents. These are just a few items. Professional development built into the school calendar allows for PLC's, Mental Health for staff and students, Professional training (including but not limited to all of the required training mandated by PED.) and parent teacher conferences. If parental involvement is important, and it is, then I would propose that PT conferences be allowed to stay as it is currently in rule. If PLC and professional development is important in improving academics then schools should be allowed to build this into their calendar as appropriate for each district? Again, one size fits all doesn't work.

Lastly, The Public-School Finance Act (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 otherwise authorized by statute. How and why does our state seem to be implementing a practice of doing away with the 4-day week, when most states are moving to a 4-day week. Fortune 500 companies are showing that production and retention is improving by going to 4-day weeks. Yet we

as a state are going against law to force a 5-day week when the finance act clearly authorizes school to operate either in a 4-day or 5-day week. My recommendation is to continue to follow the law and allow local entities to create a school calendar that best fits the community and school.

Thank you for these considerations.

Respectfully,

--

Cody Patterson

Superintendent

(575) 648-2346

Fax: (575)648-2216

From: [Cassey Malone](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change 6.10.5 NMAC School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:02:39 AM

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I am writing this letter to support 4-day schools. I teach and drive a bus for a small rural school within the Artesia Public School District. For the last 12 years, I have taught at Penasco School. Penasco students on a consistent basis test better than students who attend "typical" 5-day schools. This year I am teaching four different grade levels. We know how to utilize our time to maximize learning. We do not have music, art, or library times. Our system works! Why would we mess with a good thing? I can tell you this from experience (having taught in Artesia at a 5-day school and then here at Penasco) our school utilizes learning time better than the schools in town.

I also drive a bus for our school. I travel 116 miles a day to pick kids up in the morning and drop them off in the afternoon. 52 of those miles are on rough dirt road. That 116 miles takes up 3 hours and 45 minutes of my day. Adding the extra day adds another 3 hours and 45 minutes to our week. Kids/parents are not going to want to do this. I DON'T want to do this.

95% of my students work on their family ranches. Parents depend on them for the three days they are at home. I feel this extra day will cause us to lose students to homeschooling, or at the very least cause kids to have a bad attitude. There comes a time when schools should be left alone to do what is right for them. Isn't education about not putting everyone into a one-size fits all model? Aren't we supposed to differentiate for our students?

I say look at scores, look at ratings, and look at what is working before making a decision that affects many, many lives. It is my personal opinion the shift that should be made is for all schools to change to 4-day weeks.

Sincerely,
Cassey Malone
Penasco School

From: [Kelli Bush](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:04:19 AM

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter regarding the purposed rule change 6.10.5. This rule establishes criteria for determining the length of a school year and day, instructional hours for students, and professional work hours for teachers; and for establishing a school calendar for the school year. Currently, the school district I work for meets these requirements based on the number of hours we are required to work each year. How is it that days and hours do not equate? Adding more days for many small districts will cause a teacher shortage, which is already a problem in our state, and other budgeting issues. Many of these schools have switched to a 4-day work week, to simply continue running. The PED will be adding to an already existing crisis.

I am assuming this rule change is to “help” our state standing in education. If the PED would like to implement a rule to improve our testing and graduation rates, maybe they should look to the current attendance policies in place. Students can’t learn if they are not at school, and currently there is no penalty for students that miss an abundance of school. Also, parent accountability is practically non-existent. Parents have a responsibility to make sure their students attend school and are passing; this cannot simply fall onto the shoulders of school districts. PED should look to other states with a more stringent attendance policy and parental responsibility for guidance. Another possibility would be providing financial resources to schools to fund a program for instructional coaches. Supporting our teachers, many with an alternative license, would ensure better instruction and in return a better education for all students.

Again, I do not think simply adding school days, at the expense of many rural school districts is the answer to improving New Mexico Public Schools. This is an issue in need of a multifaceted solution, and adding days to a school year is not one of them. Solutions to this issue should be extensively researched and not done in haste. I have many issues with this rule, but the most concerning one is I believe it to be an overreach of government.

Thank you for your consideration in this manner,

Kelli Bush

From: [Shannon Francois](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:08:59 AM

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Hello,

I am an Occupational Therapist with APS and I am writing to let you know I am very much against the proposed rule change of a 180-day school year.

More days in the classroom does NOT equate better student outcomes. The current law HB 130 has already addressed a more equitable solution for how educators' and students' time is spent. Changing the law through rule is absolutely unacceptable and an overstep of the executive branch. This is a false solution to a complex problem.

From: [Stephen McKernan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirement
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:11:55 AM

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I would like to express support of the new rule change to increase student in attendance days and contact hour for school and express concern for the current APS calendar.

As a grandparent who provides care for two elementary students after school or on days they are off, I have observed that the current APS calendar is very chaotic. I love taking care of my grandchildren, so consider it special when we can care for them.

I do not understand how the children can consistently learn with so many days off. I am told that the total hours are more than last year, but it would appear that their real meaningful contact hours and days are less than last year and it is having a negative impact on their learning.

Additionally, as a New Mexican, who loves this state and its people, I was supportive of the NM Legislature and Governor in there passing a bill to increase student education days. For all the good reasons - student achievement, reduction in poor hear outcomes, having children prepared for college, trades and the workforce and reduction in crime, the increasing contact hours to increase learning is clearly the most important thing we as citizens can do for our community.

I find it interesting that other NM School Districts like Santa Fe have implemented the increased attendance requirements of the laws with positive feedback from the parents and community, but APS appears to have regressed in student contact days and hours after receiving additional funding to implement the change.

Please implement the rule change to compel APS to standardize school calendars and increase student contact hours and days in the classroom engaged in learning.

Thanks for you the opportunity to comment

Stephen McKernan
5711 Eakes Court NW
Los Ranchos, NM 87107

505.220.3814
smckernan5@msn.com

From: [Torres, Vincent](#)
To: [Romero, Arsenio, PED](#); [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: Opposition to Rule Change – 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:13:37 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[PEDSecretaryRomero12.13.2023.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Mr. Secretary:

Please find attached a letter and public comment from State Legislators regarding proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.

Thank you,

VINCE TORRES | CHIEF OF STAFF

Republican Leadership Office
New Mexico State Senate
(505) 986-4706





New Mexico State Legislature

STATE CAPITOL
Santa Fe

December 13, 2023

The Honorable Arsenio Romero
Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Sent via email to arsenio.romero@ped.nm.gov & rule.feedback@ped.nm.gov

Re: Opposition to Rule Change – 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

Dear Secretary Romero:

We, the undersigned New Mexico legislators, are writing to express our opposition to the Public Education Department's ("PED") proposed rule mandating a five-day school week and 180-day calendar for all schools. In addition to seizing more local control, this rule would circumvent the Legislature's intent regarding instruction time and place an undue burden on our school districts.

We all want improvement in our education system in New Mexico. Our declining scores and national rankings are of great concern to us, but we believe those best suited to solve this crisis are those closest to the challenge—our local school boards and administrators. For this reason, the Legislature, in consultation with educators and school boards, chose to implement a requirement based on hours, not days. This provided our school districts with the flexibility to structure their calendar based on the needs of *their* students. In a shining example of what this district-led policy implementation can do, some districts have now organized their high school programs into a four-day schedule, with the fifth day serving as an optional career technical education day.

This is the kind of innovation and flexibility we envisioned when we passed the law, and since its implementation, our school districts have worked overtime to develop a schedule that works for *them*. To change the rules now would not only be an insult to them, but to the students and teachers who will be directly impacted by this untimely proposal.

Over the past month, we have all been contacted by concerned parents, teachers, and administrators. This proposed rule clearly lacks support from key stakeholders, and as legislators, we take particular exception to a rather blatant attempt to skirt the work we accomplished earlier this year. If PED wishes to amend the laws duly enacted by the Legislature, we invite the department to bring this matter to us in January when we are in session. In the meantime, we respectfully urge you to heed the concerns of our constituents and reject this rule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Gallegos".

DAVID M. GALLEGOS
State Senator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory A. Baca".

GREGORY A. BACA
State Senator
Senate Republican Leader

The Honorable Arsenio Romero

December 13, 2023

Page 2



CRAIG W. BRANDT

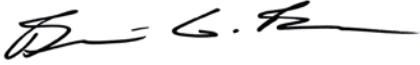
State Senator

Senate Republican Whip



PAT WOODS

State Senator



BRIAN G. BACA

State Representative



TANYA MIRABAL MOYA

State Representative

From: [Loretta Sandoval](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] extended time
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:15:07 AM

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This is NOT the way to get student achievement. Attendance is the main issue. More time??
< More time to not come to school. We as educators are losing teeth on the attendance issues.
It's hard to enforce (with our gums) to get students have compulsory attendance.
Accountability is VITAL.

--

Loretta Sandoval
(505)831-6993. Ext. 57265

From: [Rebecca Mckernan](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Rule Change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirement
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:21:00 AM

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I would like to express support of the new rule change to increase student in attendance days and contact hour for school and express concern for the current APS calendar.

As a grandparent who provides care for two elementary students after school or on days they are off, I have observed that the current APS calendar is very chaotic. I love taking care of my grandchildren, so consider it special when we can care for them.

I do not understand how the children can consistently learn with so many days off. I am told that the total hours are more than last year, but it would appear that their real meaningful contact hours and days are less than last year and it is having a negative impact on their learning.

Additionally, as a New Mexican, who loves this state and its people, I was supportive of the NM Legislature and Governor in there passing a bill to increase student education days. For all the good reasons - student achievement, reduction in poor hear outcomes, having children prepared for college, trades and the workforce and reduction in crime, the increasing contact hours to increase learning is clearly the most important thing we as citizens can do for our community.

I find it interesting that other NM School Districts like Santa Fe have implemented the increased attendance requirements of the laws with positive feedback from the parents and community, but APS appears to have regressed in student contact days and hours after receiving additional funding to implement the change.

Please implement the rule change to compel APS to standardize school calendars and increase student contact hours and days in the classroom engaged in learning.

Thanks for you the opportunity to comment

Rebecca McKernan
5711 Eakes Court NW
Los Ranchos, NM 87107

mckernanbecky@gmail.com

From: [Hector Valenzuela](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:27:07 AM

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We all think that not having school on monday is great and if we were to have monday school then the students would get rowdy and be more stressed and there will be a lower grade average on big tests students already have enough going on and monday is great for all the students.

Sincerely, Hector valenzuela.

From: [Tripp Stelnicki](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:29:13 AM

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To whom it may concern,

As a community member and spouse of a hard-working lifelong APS educator, I wholeheartedly support this proposed rule change.

The schedule implemented this year by Albuquerque Public Schools has **significantly** reduced the time that educators actually spend educating their students. The unpredictable and inconsistent nature of the school-day schedule has had an observable negative effect on the entire community of parents, children and school workers. It has removed teachers' ability to plan their day-to-day curriculum and address students' needs.

Furthermore I would support and advocate for PED investigating possible administrative actions to reduce the independent decision-making authority of Albuquerque Public Schools. To say the school district's management structure is flawed beyond remedy would be a gross understatement. If no such actions are available to the department, it should work to rally legislative support for statutory changes that would compel APS to meet evidence-based criteria for its rulemaking. Public education will never improve in this state until its largest school district is brought under control.

Kindly,

Tripp Stelnicki
Albuquerque, NM

From: [Walker Clemons](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Don't go back to 5 day school weeks.
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:32:51 AM

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This would hurt me in a lot of ways and interrupt my schedule here is why. A lot of kids including me have ski team on monday during school hours and it would be inconvenient to not be able to do ski team at all. I also have therapy in Taos on mandays which take up a large portion of my time which I couldn't do during school hours. My science teacher and other people I know also have doctors appointments on monday since she has cancer. We are all used to 4 day weeks and are meeting the weekly school hours. It would also cost over 50k a day to open the school. It would impact everyone and make everything stressful, please don't change it thank you.

From: [kathy Nahra Jesse](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [ACT](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Next years school calendar
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:34:25 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

You are telling us what you think are the solutions to New Mexico being at the bottom an educational list. Why aren't we focusing on fixing the issues that affect students' learning. Low income, homelessness, families inability to afford the necessities in todays awful economy, and the social emotional issues that come with all of this instability.

If instructional time is your concern, add hours to the day and not days to the year.

This year has been taxing on all educators, and you are planning to implement more elements to school years to come. This is a formula for disaster. So, consider a large increase to teacher salary, not a menial one. You're asking more of everyone and not compensating anyone for it. Using our hourly pay to compensate us is unconscionable.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Jenny Castro](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Proposed Rule Change
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:36:48 AM

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Good morning,

I just wanted to share my thoughts and opinion on the new proposed rule change. I believe that school boards should be the ones to help determine our school calendars. They know more than anyone about what is best for our district. Making 50% of the school weeks 5-days long would be detrimental for our district.

Most of our teachers travel almost an hour out of their towns to come teach here in Socorro. If they had to be here 5 days a week for the majority of the year, we would lose them to other schools that are much closer to them. Lots of teachers have already said they are only working for us because they don't have to make the drive 5 days out of every week.

Having 4-day weeks has been extremely helpful to not only our out of towners, but to the rest of the district as well. We utilize those Fridays to have staff in-service days, which help us get together and stay up to date on all the training we need, without interruptions that would normally happen during a regular school day. They are also convenient because instead of calling out of work for important appointments, we can schedule them on Fridays so no one has to miss work during the week.

Not only would this change affect staff members, but our students as well. I can't help but feel that student attendance would decline and many kids would be upset due to the fact that some of them utilize those Fridays to attend our Friday Program. Our Friday Program helps the kids that need to catch up on class work and get the extra help they need to succeed. They would also be affected due to teachers leaving and having to find substitutes to cover while we're waiting to fill those positions. Finding great teachers is really hard nowadays, so we're extremely grateful for the ones we have and would absolutely hate to lose them.

I would really appreciate it if you took the time to consider how this change would affect not only our school district, but the others as well. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Have a great day!

--

Jenny Castro
Administrative Assistant
Transportation & Maintenance
Socorro Consolidated Schools
Phone: (575)-838-3117 or (575)-835-0300
jcastro@socorroschools.org

From: [Noah Fleck](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Don't go back to 5 day weeks
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:37:02 AM

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

This world hurt me and my schedule outside of school. It would also hurt my dad because he has a lot of jobs he does on Monday. We are going to be doing an addition onto our deck next year and without Monday we will not have much time at all to do this project. So it will impact me and my dad because my dad won't be able to make as much money because he won't have time to do all of these extra jobs. We also schedule most of our doctor appointments and dentist appointments on Monday so we will most likely have to reschedule all of those appointments.

Noah Waggoner Grade 8

From: [Monty Woodruff](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please don't go to five days.
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:39:41 AM

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Firstly I have the most important question why? we have done 4-day weeks for forty years and now you want to change it? It doesn't make much sense or even a difference. I know our scores aren't The greatest but we can solve that in other ways. It's also inconsiderate to say we have terrible scores because we have had better scores than the five-day week schools.

Please consider this, Monty J. Woodruff III

From: [Rion Fleck](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Day School Week
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:45:27 AM

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Dear, New Mexico Department Of Education

I think we should continue having our four-day school weeks because most of the kids in our schools do extra things on the Monday we have off. I will also state that we have a teacher shortage that will also make a lot of teachers quit. Also, I already know of two teachers who plan to quit and retire but im sure there will be a lot more. Most of my dentist and doctor which I will have to leave school to do. The thing I've noticed is I used to go to a school that did five days and my scores and grades were much worse and now with four days my scores and grades are much better

.

sincerely,

Rion Waggoner 8th grade from Cimarron Municipal Schools

From: [Bear Lindsey](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:49:03 AM

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Dear New Mexico PED,

I believe we should not have school on Mondays because most Mondays, the children of this district work. We also learn more valuable things about the real world such as how to work. Also, most kids in the valley use that extra Monday to do something productive like ski during the winter. Lastly, if you look at our district's overall test scores, we score the same if not higher than the rest of the state that goes five days a week.

Thank you,
Bear Lindsey 8th grade

From: [Chloe Honea](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:49:16 AM

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I think we should not a five day week because some of us work on Mondays and we wanna go ski and we learn the same like everybody else with four days. Also we can go to doctor appts. and other stuff you cant do on weekends so we dont have to miss a day of school.

Thank you for your time,
Chloe Martinez 8th Grd

From: [Korn Pop](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Quemado high school parent on 5 short school days.
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 11:52:25 AM

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

To whom this may concern

As a single dad who has lived in rio rancho where my son would get out of school at 2 everyday I know how difficult it is to do anything within that time frame such as work, shopping, and any business needed. If there wasn't an option to send my child to a daycare right after school nothing would have gotten done and that is with everything no more than 30 minutes away. It gets worse out here based on having to drive miles to get to the bus stop or the school. Also there are no daycares out here which would mean I would have 4 hours to get anything done. Being that everything is at least a hour and a half away means it would take hours out of my day to just drive back and forth to get my child. Out here a full school day helps out everyone in this community to change that would put unnecessary stress on parents, kids, and the school system. Having Fridays off for Dr. appointments and other needed activities is crucial here because if my son got out at 2 I would have to pick him up and only have 3 hours to get things like this done and adding the drive time into that it really only gives me an hour to complete any appointments. The students also have time to learn being that Quemado schools rank in the top 20% in reading, math, and science proficiency with a 98% 4 year graduation rate. I support the 4 day school week because it makes life easier for parents, teachers, and students in Quemado. Thank you for your time I hope this helps anyone understand that short days for five days only means more issues for the entire Quemado community.

From: [Clinton Showers](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep Our 4-Day School Week!!
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:02:29 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 on behalf of Quemado Independent School District, which includes Datil Elementary School and Quemado Schools, in direct opposition of HB130. I give consent for my email to be read aloud at the meeting on December 18th, 2023, should it be chosen.

You have probably received many emails over the last few days on this. Most of them are possibly a copy paste as most people don't know what to say. I will just be blunt. We have had a 4 day a week school week for longer then I've been alive and besides what has been said due to 4H,FFA,NMAA there are other reasons as well. For one most of the children in this area are on ranches they are getting up as early as 4am to catch a bus to make it to school. These children also help there parents with there ranches there farms and other business. Yes even in this day in age people still require the help of there children to keep things running. If they kids now have to go to school 5 days a week they are still wake up at 4am an extra day a week wasting more time riding a bus. They won't be able to help there parents and will just be burnt out. Since that extra day is when they actually get to spend time with there parents and relax. So as most companies in the US are finally looking at a 4 day work week as it is it makes no sense for children to move to a 5 day week. So to me it would make no sense for HB130.

Sincerely,

A concerned Uncle of a Quemado Schools Student

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rule Change Regarding Instructional Days

Shannon Montalbano
500 E. High Street
Red River, NM 87558
shannon@redrivervalleycs.com

December 13, 2023

Dear Representative,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rule change that would replace the required 1140-hour requirement to having all New Mexico schools move to 180 instructional days. While I understand the need for flexibility in educational policies, I believe that such a change may not be suitable for our unique community due to several compelling reasons.

Firstly, our community is already grappling with a high-quality staff shortage. Implementing this rule change would place an undue burden on our dedicated educators, compromising the quality of education our students receive. Additionally, the scarcity of substitute teachers further exacerbates the staffing challenges, making it difficult to maintain a consistent and effective learning environment.

Moreover, our community faces increased costs to operate a school for an additional day each week. This financial strain is particularly burdensome, given the existing constraints on our budget. We must carefully consider the economic implications of extending the instructional week without adequate resources.

In rural areas like ours, transportation costs pose a significant challenge. Extending the school week would lead to increased expenses for commuting, impacting both staff and students who endure daily one-hour-plus commutes. This additional financial and logistical strain disproportionately affects our community members, undermining the accessibility of education for all.

In light of these concerns, I urge you to reconsider the proposed rule change and take into account the unique challenges our community faces. ***A more tailored approach that considers the distinctive needs of each educational environment would better serve the diverse range of communities across our region.***

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I trust that you will carefully consider the potential repercussions before making a decision that could detrimentally impact our students, staff, and community as a whole.

Sincerely,
Shannon Montalbano, M.Ed.
Reading Interventionist

From: [Melissa Laeser](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Affects to Students
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:10:25 PM

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Hello,

Thank you for allowing for public comment.

I am a parent, teacher and community member of Los Alamos Public Schools.

The proposed rule is overstepping the local district control. Los Alamos Public Schools is operating and educating students at a high level. Taking control away from community stake-holders and implementing this rule-change will fundamentally change the way our district works.

Mental health is a great concern among teachers and families in Los Alamos. 29% of the students report feelings of stress and school achievement. The proposed rule change would force our students to attend more classes per day and would increase that stress level. And, my question would be, why?!? Why put more on the students of Los Alamos Public Schools? Learning is occurring. Taking control from the district would negatively impact the students of Los Alamos Public Schools.

We, as educators, collect, analyze, and use data to understand, teach and assess our students' knowledge. We know when learning is occurring and when it is not. Changes can be made at the local level to assist students. To take away local control would take the district's ability to make changes that are right for kids. It invalidates all of the work we do with students to make changes at the district level.

Please reconsider the wide-reaching rule change and keep decisions being made at the district level to educate kids.

Melissa Laeser
Teacher, Los Alamos High School
Adjunct Professor, UNM
Parent, senior and freshman at LAHS

From: [Carol Cabiedes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:23:42 PM

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I have concerns with the process for this change. I believe that the Legislature worked hard and with due diligence on this bill, only to have the PED decide "that's not what we meant". PED was part of the process for the bill and given that it has only been in effect for a partial school year (5 months), this feels like an over reaction on their part.

I would like to know what valid data they have from a 5 month period. Does it really point to non-growth?

In this state we have had K plus, K-3 plus and K-5 plus, do we have valid cohort data that even shows more time in the classroom equals growth?

Our state has complex issues, we need to start looking further than the next easy fix and spend the time and money to look at our more complex issues, poverty, socio-emotional trauma and absenteeism.

Thank you for listening
Carol Cabiedes

From: [Jamie Sweeney](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:25:06 PM

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6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.

I first want to address my disappointment in NM PED for holding this hearing on a day when all educators will be at work, unable to represent themselves. It shows that PED does not want to hear the feedback from the very people that would be most affected by this sudden change in policy, and is it not the job of PED to represent and support their employees?

There has been no data to support that adding more days to the instructional calendar will help with student achievement and it does not address New Mexico's biggest educational problem: absences. Until PED can solve the problem of students not coming to school, then I do not see how adding more days will help with graduation rates or with student success. Students will simply continue to ditch or stay home for more days out of the year.

I believe that this calendar change shows that PED does not have any regard for educators and will not entice any new educators to work for the state. As we are already short teachers, and this calendar change will no doubt cause many resignations, this mandate will only cause more problems that PED will no doubt be prompt to solve.

I can speak for many of my colleagues in saying that educators do not support this sudden calendar change as PED has not shown that it will actually help educators do their jobs.

-Jamie Bulling

From: [Melanie Woods Sedillo](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130 and 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:30:36 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 proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives. Changing law through rule is unacceptable, as well as an absolute overstep of the executive branch. Legislators and other representatives worked hard to pass HB 130 - they did not work so hard on this matter just to be undermined by the PED. This is also a false solution to a very complex issue. Having more instructional days without accounting for any sort of Professional Development or Parent Teacher Conferences is ridiculous.

We need instructors in our classrooms to provide effective instruction to students, and overstepping your boundaries to make changes to working conditions without any of our input is a fantastic way to drive instructors right out of the profession. Do you know how many teachers have literally fled the profession because of unrealistic expectations such as these? The numbers are too high.

At what point in your 180 day instructional calendar are we supposed to attend to our professional responsibilities outside of classroom instruction, such as for the Professional Development and Parent Teacher Conferences that I mentioned above? This is not okay. Do better.

Warm regards,
Melanie Woods-Sedillo
First Grade Teacher
Lavaland Elementary School
(505) 836-4911 ext. 59233



From: [Aaron Jawson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED Proposal to Lengthen School Year
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:44:10 PM

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

Hello,

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 workerss, licensed school psychologistss, certified school counselorss, licensed school nursess 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.

Schools are under-staffed and under-funded as they continue to be the primary source of health services, food services, educational services, and therapy services. More of an onus should be shouldered by the businesses and communities that benefit from schools creating employees and citizens.

Creating more workload for school employees, without more business/community measures, lowers their quality of life and leads to more people leaving the professions. The outlook is grim for there to be education for all community members if we do not pool more resources and spread the burden.

Sincerely,
Aaron Jawson

From: [Marvin Macauley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: [Apodaca, Richard](#); [thomas vigil](#); [Rounds, Stan](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Rule Concern
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 12:47:39 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

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

As the Superintendent of Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools, Marvin MacAuley, I write to express our collective opposition to the proposed rules delineated in Title 6, Chapter 10, Part 5 (School Instructional Time Requirements) and Title 6, Chapter 19, Part 4 (Accreditation Procedures) of the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED). We believe that these proposed rules may pose significant challenges to our district's ability to provide quality education to our students.

Our district, recognized for its innovative practices and consistent academic growth post-COVID, has demonstrated unwavering commitment to meeting NMPED achievement requirements. We take pride in our educators' dedication and the collaborative efforts that have positioned us as a leader in adapting to the evolving educational landscape.

Specifically, we would like to draw attention to the following concerns:

1. **School Instructional Time Requirements:** The proposed rules regarding instructional time requirements appear to be excessively prescriptive and may not accommodate the unique needs and circumstances of individual schools within our district. A more flexible approach is essential to allow our educators the autonomy to adapt their teaching strategies and schedules to best serve the diverse needs of our student population. Eliminating a four-day school week, for instance, would disproportionately impact our rural community, where families often make significant sacrifices to get students to school. This change could lead to increased student absences, disrupting the learning experience and hindering academic progress.
2. **Accreditation Procedures:** While recognizing the importance of maintaining high educational standards through accreditation, we are concerned that the proposed changes may impose additional administrative burdens on our schools. We urge the NMPED to carefully evaluate the potential impact of these changes, ensuring that they do not inadvertently divert resources away from direct student instruction or create unnecessary challenges for our district.

We kindly request that the NMPED engage in a collaborative and inclusive process, involving input from educators, parents, and stakeholders, to reconsider these proposed rules. Our district remains committed to providing the highest quality education for our students, and we believe that a more cooperative approach will lead to regulations that better serve the needs of our schools and community.

Furthermore, we advocate for increased opportunities for public input and transparency in the rulemaking process. It is imperative that the voices of those directly affected by these regulations are considered and integrated into the decision-making process.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns. We trust that, in your capacity, you will carefully evaluate the potential impact of these proposed rules on Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools and take our feedback into consideration during the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Marvin MacAuley Superintendent Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools

**Marvin
MacAuley**
Superintendent
Mesa Vista
Consolidated Schools
PO Box 309, Ojo Caliente NM 87549
 505-901-2484
 505-583-2645
 marvin.macauley@mesavista.org

From: [Sarah Prouty](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback: 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:00:54 PM

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

I am a mother to a student at the Loving, NM, school district. It is my understanding there is coming a hearing regarding potential rule changes that directly affect our district. We have been a 4 day a week district for many years and have seen continuous success with our scheduling. That state statute 22-13-1 voted on by our elected representatives will be completely ignored under this potential calendar rule change, as well as the administrative code 6.10.5! This would be a total bypass of the democratic process! Our school boards should have local control over each district calendar and this was voted in over a decade ago!

Our district here in Loving, NM, has seen year after year that our decision to calendar our school schedule to 4 days a week has led to our students and school staff by providing much needed time to efficiently prepare for our students, giving more time to us as families to implement our core values and closeness and togetherness and involvement in school, and it's given outcomes that exceed student state average year after year! We also like to know our savings helps provide additional funding to our students needs in school! New Mexico is continuously deemed at the bottom of the national list for education and our district has been proud to provide students who rise above that statistic and offer this state successful growing adults to enter the work force and it's colleges!

If anything, the state should discuss this district as an example to follow rather than stripping our students of what is working and giving them no option but to fall into a schedule that leaves students and families exhausted and unmotivated! All districts should be able to make a local decision with school boards and not be forced into a decision that will disrupt and harm rather than help.

We do not need to fix something that isn't broken.

Thank you,
Sarah Prouty
A concerned parent

From: [Laurel Pazienza](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC Rule 6.10.5 "School Calendar Requirements"
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:04:56 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,
Laurel Pazienza

From: [Amy Bell](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:12:06 PM

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

To Whom It May Concern,

As an educator in APS and a parent of a 3rd grade APS student, I am furious with the proposed change in school calendar AGAIN. We need consistency and support, NOT MORE CHANGES!!!

If you want test scores to increase, schools need to be staffed with not only a licensed teacher in every classroom, but other support staff including counselors, social workers, etc. Expecting teachers that haven't left the profession yet to do more with less is not only insulting, but infuriating. We can't keep rolling with the punches of taking on more and more, then get blamed for test scores not being what "experts" and governing bodies think they should be. When was the last time these "experts" were in a classroom for more than a quick visit? When was the last time they saw what the average teacher in APS handles on a daily basis?

The biggest things that impact our test scores are classrooms not having a licensed teacher, large class sizes, chronic attendance/truancy issues, and student's basic needs having to be met by the teacher/school instead of at home. If you really want test scores to increase, start with these major issues and leave the calendar alone!

Amy Bell

From: [Robyn Cook](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes to NMAC 6.10.5 based on HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:24:15 PM

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

Dear Secretary Romero and PED,

I would like you to reconsider your decision on your proposed changes to NMAC 6.10.5 based on HB 130. You have yet to consider the root-cause analysis that went into deciding for our district to go to four days. We agree with Secretary Romero that quality and data-driven instruction are necessary in every decision we make. The following reasons led to our Middle School being recognized as Blue Ribbon in 2016 for closing the achievement gap. Our high school is recognized as a school of Excellence on NM Vistas, and both the elementary and middle schools are Spotlight schools. It is quality over quantity, and there is not a wasted minute.

- Attendance is crucial. Teachers can only work their magic if students are here. Most medical and dental facilities are at least an hour's drive for our families, either in Alamogordo or Ruidoso. This means students missed at least ½ day or a whole day for appointments. We chose to take off Mondays so that students and staff could utilize that day for appointments. This increased the attendance of both our students and staff.
- Our district made the switch over 15 years ago, and we saved over \$250,000 in heating and transportation costs. That allows us to keep two teaching positions. Now, we are looking at over a \$1 million cost, a loss in staff, and larger class sizes.
- Since COVID, real estate prices on the mountain have skyrocketed. Many of the staff can no longer afford to live here. This will mean an additional day they will need to commute from out of town to teach in our district. This is hard on teachers' pay. I am trying to imagine how EAs, nurse's aides, or custodial staff will be able to afford the additional cost.
- We have utilized Mondays as data days and additional PD days. We are paying our staff stipends for those. If those Mondays are taken away, the best practice for collaboration is lost. It has been crucial to our success in identifying student strengths and weaknesses. Those Mondays, along with the loss of PLC time, are vital to the growth that we have seen in our students. Teachers need the time to plan interventions with their colleagues and dig into their data.

- We have utilized Mondays for extracurricular activities for students. This has allowed the students to apply the skills they have learned in the classroom to academic competitions and on the court or get one-on-one support.
- Our geographic location means that one of our bus routes is 1 ½ hours long ONE way. This means those students will now be on the bus an additional 3 hours a week.

My question, Secretary Romero, is, what is the plan if this does not change the scores in New Mexico? What was the root cause analysis that determined this is the best practice? Why are we abandoning the best practices we know work, like PLCs, data-driven instruction, and vertical alignment?

Thank you for your response,

Robyn Cook,
K-8 Principal, Cloudcroft Municipal Schools
Excellence for Student Achievement NMSBA 2014, Blue Ribbon Principal 2016, NAESP
Administrator of the Year 2017

From: [Jim & Dorothy Greene](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed rule 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:32:19 PM

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

Greetings,

In regards to this change, we are totally in favor of going back to the five day school week. We argued against going to a four day school when they proposed it. We researched the four day school week across the country and found it did not work and we presented this to the school board and they voted it down. With the superintendent and the one school board member working on the rest of the school board, they finally got them to go for a four day school week. They promised us that our scores would go thru the roof because we would get highly qualified teachers. Well, look at the scores and they show that they lied on both accounts.

The students are really struggling with the much longer days, after a couple of months of this longer day, it takes away from their ability to learn. The sports are out of hand, especially basketball as they have games several nights during the school week, and it also happens during volleyball.

We need you to look at the best education of our students and not be pressured to stay on a loosing four day school week by the teachers and administrators.

Thank you for giving us a chance to voice our concern for a better education for our future leaders.

Jim and Dorothy Greene

"Life is tough, it's tougher if you're stupid" John Wayne

From: [Ardia Gray](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB 130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:34:19 PM

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

Dear Secretary Romero and PED,

I would like you to reconsider your decision on your proposed changes to NMAC 6.10.5 based on HB 130. You have yet to consider the root-cause analysis that went into deciding for our district to go to four days. We agree with Secretary Romero that quality and data-driven instruction are necessary in every decision we make. The following reasons led to our Middle School being recognized as Blue Ribbon in 2016 for closing the achievement gap. Our high school is recognized as a school of Excellence on NM Vistas, and both the elementary and middle schools are Spotlight schools. It is quality over quantity, and there is not a wasted minute.

- Attendance is crucial. Teachers can only work their magic if students are here. Most medical and dental facilities are at least an hour's drive for our families, either in Alamogordo or Ruidoso. This means students missed at least ½ day or a whole day for appointments. We chose to take off Mondays so that students and staff could utilize that day for appointments. This increased the attendance of both our students and staff.
- Our district made the switch over 15 years ago, and we saved over \$250,000 in heating and transportation costs. That allows us to keep two teaching positions. Now, we are looking at over a \$1 million cost, a loss in staff, and larger class sizes.
- Since COVID, real estate prices on the mountain have skyrocketed. Many of the staff can no longer afford to live here. This will mean an additional day they will need to commute from out of town to teach in our district. This is hard on teachers' pay. I am trying to imagine how EAs, nurse's aides, or custodial staff will be able to afford the additional cost.
- We have utilized Mondays as data days and additional PD days. We are paying our staff stipends for those. If those Mondays are taken away, the best practice for collaboration is lost. It has been crucial to our success in identifying student strengths and weaknesses. Those Mondays, along with the loss of PLC time, are vital to the growth that we have seen in our students. Teachers need the time to plan interventions with their colleagues and dig into their data.

- We have utilized Mondays for extracurricular activities for students. This has allowed the students to apply the skills they have learned in the classroom to academic competitions and on the court or get one-on-one support.
- Our geographic location means that one of our bus routes is 1 ½ hours long ONE way. This means those students will now be on the bus an additional 3 hours a week.

My question, Secretary Romero, is, what is the plan if this does not change the scores in New Mexico? What was the root cause analysis that determined this is the best practice? Why are we abandoning the best practices we know work, like PLCs, data-driven instruction, and vertical alignment?

--

Ardia Gray
Food Service Manager
Cloudcroft Municipal Schools
10 Swallow Place
Cloudcroft, NM. 88317
575-601-4416 ext. 306
575-921-6401 Cell

From: [Paula Lockmiller](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 1140 instructional rulemaking
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:36:45 PM

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

The proposed rule change to 180-day calendar will not improve attendance, in fact it would have a reversal effect on student attendance/performance. As an educator, I have been employed in a 5- and 4-day week school calendar. The performance and attendance level for students in the 4-day school week was more successful. The 5 day calendar lost effectiveness on day five.

The 5-day calendar will create a financial hardship on the small rural schools. The rural schools are essential for many communities. Students will be subjected to extended time in transportation to and from school. The extended time travel will create stress and lead to lower student performance. I strongly urge you to consider the well being of all students and retain the current hour requirements for the school year.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

From: [Amanda Riley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:47:39 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 have been an educator in the state of New Mexico for 20 years. I have taught in a large district (Rio Rancho) and a med-size district (Artesia). I have also been a mother for over 20 years and spanning over 40 years of parenting children in the school system. My husband and I have a graduated son that is now excelling in college...out of state, a Junior in High School, who is taking all Honors or AP Classes and excelling, and a middle school son, who is also in Honors class and doing amazing!

I have grave concerns with rule 6.10.5, which is being proposed. Based on the data that was released to justify the change, it is not coherent with what is published data for parents and educators to justify the growth happening. In 2022-2023 school year the state of New Mexico saw 38% Proficiency in ELA and 24% Proficiency in Math. This information reported was true. However, what has been failed to be provided for Legislation is district by district. Artesia Public Schools showed 75% Proficiency in ELA and 45% in Math. National Data for the same year shows ELA Proficiency at 24% and Math Proficiency at 37%. Explain why you would change an entire state when each district should be looked at to determine if they need more instructional time?

Second, when you look at the National Average of ACT you find the overall average composite score is 19.2. New Mexico has an average score of 19.8. This is higher than Texas (19.3), Oklahoma (17.8), and Arizona (17.7). When you look at the calendar requirements for the highest scoring states in our region, you find that Colorado (24.8) operates on a requirement of 160 days. They also pay their teachers an average of \$60,130 for 160 days. This number is very close to the average pay in New Mexico; however, teachers are working an extra 20 days!

Third concern is based on the facts that we are already operating in a negative based on teacher retention and the lack of certified teachers that are educating our students. Currently, 83% of teachers are certified in the fields that they are teaching, if certified at all! Does this not seem to be a bigger concern?

In conclusion, it seems rule 6.10.5 simply looks good on paper! It has not been evaluated at this point to be a valuable change to our state academic calendar. I have always taught with the philosophy that students should be put first, but in this case the data doesn't add up to show the outcome will be better! Instead, we will have higher absences, teachers will leave, and our state will continue to suffer regarding education. Please consider the whole picture before making a decision, not simply what the Secretary of Education has provided!

Amanda Riley
ariley@bulldogs.org
Artesia Intermediate School

From: [Branden Marshall](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130 - NMPED 2023 Proposed Rule Change
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:52:52 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

I was reviewing the proposed rule change as lined out below.

First, changing the “rule” in the manor that is proposed is not just an “update”. This effectively changes the number of hours teachers will need to work. Changing the “rule” in this way will put additional burden on our already pressurized teaching staff in the state. This at a time when even finding teachers has been a challenge. Now you are going to unilaterally mandate more hours. Additionally, I see nothing within the proposed rule change that addresses additional pay for the additional work.

If the rule change noted is, in fact, what occurs; I can assure you that this will not be accepted favorably by the teaching staff. Also, in the event this takes place and additional work is added as a “rule change”... I have no doubt this situation will land on multiple lawyers desks along with being highlighted on multiple new networks.

This is a fundamental change to the law and needs to be handled as such. A “rule change” doesn’t fit the situation and, again, something many lawyers would love to be a part of if it is followed through with.

HB 130 - Passed Spring 2023	Proposed Rule Change
Mandated 1,140 instructional hours	Mandates all public school calendars shall include at least 180 instructional days per school year exclusive of teacher professional work hours.
Up to 60 instructional hours per school year for elementary grades and 30 instructional hours for middle and high school grades may be used for professional work hours, which may be embedded during a normal school day.	Up to 60 instructional hours per school year for primary grades and up to 30 instructional hours for secondary grades may be used for professional work hours, provided that professional work hours are scheduled before, after, or on a day other than the required minimum of 180 instructional days. When calculating a school's total number of instructional hours, time shall not be double counted as both instructional hours for student learning and professional work hours.
Acknowledged the importance of Parent/Teacher Conferences by including them as part of instructional hours.	Important educator functions are explicitly defined as "professional work hours" and cannot be included as instructional time: * Parent Teacher Conferences * Professional Development * Mentorship, Coaching, and Collaboration

Thank you,

A concern and attentive citizen.

From: [Babz Stauffer](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements Type of Rule Change: Repeal and Replace
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 2:00:48 PM

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It is not in the best interest of any community to supersede the autonomy of local, elected school boards in regards to school calendars. Also, adding days has been tried before and has not made a difference for the Deming community.

Babz Stauffer

GCPM

Project Manager

Dept. of Construction & Facilities

DEMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

575-639-2892 M

575-543-1062 O



"Whatever good things we build, end up building us."-Jim Rohn

From: [Halee Goff](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback for 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 2:20:32 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 writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rule for 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements. My opposition is due to both my professional and personal views on how this rule will greatly impact students, teachers, schools, and communities, particularly those in rural areas. I urge the New Mexico Public Education Department to consider all stakeholder views as our state is vast in geographical and cultural diversity. Creating a rule that does not serve the entirety of the state is biased, short sighted, and inconsiderate to these stakeholders.

I am currently the principal at Artesia Intermediate School. It is my personal belief that adding more instructional days does not solve our overarching educational issues in the state. Adding more days does not solve the attendance issues we continue to see out of the pandemic. Adding more days without other proper resources, such as time for professional development, family and community engagement resources, and a true attendance law that holds consequences for absenteeism, does not improve our achievement rates. Forcing schools to add days in spite of the lack of data and evidence showing this move alone will increase achievement will only cause negative effects on students, teachers, families, and communities. A better, more well-rounded approach to improving our educational system is to get out into our communities and meet with stakeholders. Allow our democratic society to have a voice in helping with this dilemma. Allow those that know our communities, families, and students best be present at the table when educational improvement plans are being discussed. Allow local control where those in our communities that know and understand our needs best have the ability to make decisions for our schools. The overwhelming response to this proposed rule shows that stakeholders were not involved in the decision-making process.

I am beyond blessed to have an incredible staff with teachers who are dedicated to their students and put in an abundance of additional hours above their contracted time to provide the best education to our students possible. However, teacher burnout is real and is coming earlier and earlier in a teacher's career. By adding more mandates, a greater workload, and additional days that will provide no benefit to students will only add to this burnout. Our teachers are dealing with chronic absenteeism, student and parent apathy, and an increasing disrespect from students. Teachers entered the career field to educate students, to provide the best opportunities possible for them, and to help shape our nation's future. Teaching is not a traditional career where an individual can come to work at 8:00 am and leave at 5:00 pm. No, teachers show up early, rarely get breaks, leave late, and take work home with them. If they do not, they cannot provide the best education possible to our students. We need to take into consideration what the increased calendar will do to teachers. We stand to lose valuable and irreplaceable teachers to early retirement, resignations, or to other states that value the profession. In an outsider's mind, the increase in school days is not significant; however, this increase will make a significant impact and New Mexico students deserve

to have the very best.

On a personal note, I am a product of a rural school who has successfully operated on a four-day school week for decades. My school produced students who were capable of competing on the national level for scholarships and at colleges and universities. I feel my public-school education prepared me to become an informed and educated individual who understands that a good work ethic goes a long way. In addition to the high-quality education I received, my school promoted family involvement. We are seeing a continued lack of family involvement with our public schools today. Focusing more on the issues that are truly impacting student achievement within schools would be a better use of taxpayer dollars than dictating a school calendar and a school week that is not conducive to all communities in New Mexico. Has consideration been given to the impact this change will have on small schools? Has consideration been given to the potential loss of teachers who are at the small schools for the four-day week? Has consideration been given to the financial hardship this will add to those small schools that could potentially force a consolidation with other schools? Has consideration been given to how this will have a sweeping impact on those small towns in which the schools serve as the life blood for the communities? It would be a shame to lose entire communities because schools may close or suffer.

A decision that will impact thousands of students, teachers, and community members should not be made without all voices being heard and true consideration given to how this decision will have a lasting impact. To dictate this mandate would go against the very core of democratic values in which the people have a voice. Please be willing to work with those who have expressed their opposition as I know we can come up with more viable solutions to our issues rather than making a sweeping change that will have a negative impact. Again, I am urging NM PED to not implement this rule until further research and data are collected, stakeholder input is considered, and a true solution is sought. To move forward with the rule at this point would be inconsiderate and detrimental to our school communities.

Thank you,

Halee Goff

Principal

Artesia Zia Intermediate School

575-746-2766

ARTESIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – “SUPERIOR QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS”

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From: [Traci Pierce](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 2:28:15 PM

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I would like to voice my opinion about HB130. The ability to attend school four days a week allows our students to attend school regularly and shows that our attendance is above the state guidelines. We live in a rural community that relies heavily on agriculture. Our students work their farms and small ranches with their families to make them productive. Should a mandated 5 day school week become mandatory, our students will be forced to choose between school and their responsibilities to their families, and school attendance would lose.

Our graduation rate is among the top in the state and our test scores are in the top of the state as well. We have proven that a 4 day school week (same hours as 5 day schools, just one day shorter) is as productive as a school system that attends school 5 days a week.

Financially, it makes sense to attend school 4 days. Our bus routes are lengthy and some of the students that are depending on transportation live 30-40 miles out. The ability to take advantage of a 4 day week cuts down on fuel and wear and tear on the few buses that we have. When the building is closed for the one day a week, we are allowed to turn air conditioners/heaters off so that we save electricity and we do not need to provide meals for the students.

In conclusion, a 4 day school week works for many reasons. Thank you for your time.

Traci Pierce

From: [Misti Price](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 4 day school week
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:03:40 PM

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To Whom it may concern:

My family has been involved with a school when it was on a 5 day week schedule and 4 week. The 4 day week makes it so much easier to schedule doctor and therapy appointments, having them miss less days. And living in a very rural area, it is so much more beneficial on traveling. And when it comes to sports, the further away games are scheduled on Thursdays to make sure kids aren't getting home so late and having to get up early for school. I have seen reports and the 4 day week saves the schools money on maintenance and utilities by being closed on Fridays. And as the students are old enough to work and learn more responsibility, it allows them time to work on Fridays.

Please don't take the 4 day weeks away!

Thank you,
Misti Price

From: [Yvonne Barnes](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed amendment 6.10.5 NMAC
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:04:41 PM

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

To whom it may concern,

This email concerns the proposed amendment to 6.10.5 NMAC, potentially adding instructional days and other stipulations to all districts' school calendars. Doing so would increase the current 150-day school year to 180 days at Cloudcroft Municipal Schools.

As a teacher and parent of two students who previously attended Cloudcroft Schools, I understand how these changes could significantly impact our small community for many families and school staff. The rule changes being proposed would negatively impact our current 4-day school week schedule by extending the school year which impacts both our District's limited resources and makes changes that are tailored for other districts without the consideration of our unique needs of our small village community. Many teachers and parents have adjusted their lives to our current calendar and a change would force them to make life-changing decisions for their current jobs, childcare, and other personal family considerations.

Our calendar is tailored to support our staff and students to achieve better student performance, improve student attendance, more rest and time for extracurricular activities, increase staff morale, and support a better staff work-life balance. Our current calendar is taken into careful consideration each year by a committee of dedicated staff to ensure we stay among the top-performing 25% of schools for Elementary and Middle Schools and among the top 10% of High Schools across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding my opinion and concerns as a dedicated staff member, teacher, coach, advisor, and parent of students at Cloudcroft Municipal Schools. These proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar requirements could greatly impact life for everyone involved at our schools.

--

--

Yvonne Barnes
Cloudcroft Municipal Schools
3rd Grade

From: [Lynne Nichols](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Calendar
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:08:25 PM

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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.

Throughout the Pandemic years Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools made great gains in student test scores and graduation rate. Our 4 day week is beneficial to our rural community in a myriad of ways. Many of our high school students are counted upon to work over the 3 day weekends to help their families financially. The shorter week keeps our overhead costs down in our poorer district including such things as utilities, gas and maintenance on buses, and supplies. Taking away our local control can only hurt our district.

Lynne Nichols
Fifth Grade Teacher
Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools

From: [Renee Baggett](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Against 5 Day School Week
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:12:14 PM

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I am writing in protest to the proposed 5-day school week. This is such an off the wall idea for our small communities in rural New Mexico. The following are a couple key reasons why this new rule should not pass!

- The HS Graduation Rate for NM schools on 4-day weeks consistently outpaces that of NM schools on 5-day weeks. Logan 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 schools on 4-day weeks consistently outpaces that of NM schools on 5-day weeks. Logan Elementary School boasts a 79% reading proficiency rate, more than double the state average of 38%.
- The Student Achievement in Math for NM schools on 4-day weeks consistently outpaces that of NM schools on 5-day weeks. Logan Elementary School boasts a 61% math proficiency rate, more than double the state average of 24%.

If this new rule passes I feel that the drop out rate will rise! More students will just get thier GED! More students will transition to online learning, to work at their own pace vs. coming to school for 5 days! We do not need "more time in the seats"! That is absurd!

Our rural communities have proved time and time again that 4 day school weeks work! Our test scores are phenomenal! Our graduation rates are phenomenal!

Please DO NOT PASS this new proposed rule! Our children will suffer!

Renee Baggett

575-487-2252

Administrative Business Office Support

Athletic Director Secretary

Logan Municipal Schools

From: [Victoria Daley](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Extending the School Year
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:17:42 PM

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I have been an educator for 17 years, and I strongly disagree with extending the school year to a minimum of 1140 instruction hours. The evidence around lengthening the school day is mixed and mostly correlational rather than causal.

Extending the school year should be a decision made by each school district and not the state government. Students in my district need quality instruction and rather than more instruction. They need breaks, time with their families, and time for extracurricular activities. Teachers need time for grading, planning, and collaboration.

Please do not extend the school year. Allow districts to make decisions that are best for their populations.

--

Ms. Vickie Daley

Tiger Pride!

She/Her

Aspen GATE and LAPS OotM



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

From: [Dina Barajas](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:25:43 PM

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

Dear NMPED,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements.

As a middle school teacher invested in our students' learning and wellbeing, I affirm that under the current law HB 130, adult learning equals student learning. The current law acknowledges that teacher PD and committees that work toward the betterment of student learning should be compensated for this labor. However, the new PED proposal does not include Parent Teacher conferences or any time for educators to learn and work together. Such idealism devalues teachers as professionals and their hard work during and outside of the duty day to improve upon students' learning and wellbeing. As society's educators who selflessly work well beyond the work week for the benefit of our students and community, it is only ethical that our labor is reciprocated with being valued and compensated.

In addition, as research indicates, our students are affected by chronic health conditions, physical and cognitive disabilities, poverty, housing and food insecurity, abuse and neglect. An effective means of combating these social ills includes: staffing our schools with the wellbeing of the whole child in mind. This 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 an efficient amount of 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. In order to best combat these social ailments, it is imperative to acknowledge the real contributors of low academic performance, instead of scapegoating and blaming teachers. This lack of ethics erodes the public trust and transparency that the department of education and political leaders have toward our communities. And, does not resolve the social problems that prevent robust teaching and learning from occurring.

I appreciate your consideration of my letter.

Sincerely,

--

Dina Barajas PhD, MS, MA
SE English Language Arts Teacher
6th - 8th Grade
ELD Department Chair
Harrison Middle School

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From: [Kimberly Anne Rodriguez](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AGAINST more instructional hours
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:39:51 PM

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Dear Public Education Department of New Mexico,

My name is Kimberly Rodriguez Martin, and as an Albuquerque Public School District educator with eight years of dedicated service, I am writing to express my serious concerns about the recent changes impacting educators and student learning. While I remain passionate about teaching and its profound impact on young minds, the current state of our profession in 2023 demands a critical reevaluation of priorities and policies.

It is deeply concerning that, instead of fostering an environment that empowers educators, we are witness to an ever-increasing mountain of administrative burdens and unyielding compliance demands. These requirements, imposed by both PED and APS at various levels, significantly detract from the core focus of our duty: providing high-quality instruction and nurturing vibrant learning environments for our students.

The proposed extension of school hours is not simply an inconvenience; it is a misguided and frankly harmful intrusion into the delicate balance of student well-being and learning efficacy. Lengthening the school year without addressing the existing burden on educators and students will only exacerbate burnout, diminish engagement, and ultimately hinder academic progress.

The proliferation of paperwork, redundant professional development sessions, and resource limitations disproportionately consume valuable time and energy that could be directed towards student-centered activities. This detrimental shift away from teaching has demonstrably eroded educator morale and created a palpable sense of frustration and demotivation. In my own experience, and unfortunately in the experiences of many colleagues, the joy of teaching is being gradually extinguished by the suffocating weight of bureaucratic demands.

This alarming trend has me, and numerous dedicated colleagues, actively considering abandoning the profession altogether. This stark reality should serve as a stark warning bell to APS and PED. Losing experienced educators due to unaddressed systemic issues is a grave blow to the very foundation of our educational system.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed extension of school hours and instead prioritize measures that directly address the root causes of educator burnout:

- Reducing unnecessary administrative burdens: Streamline reporting processes, minimize redundant tasks, and empower educators to make

decisions directly impacting their classrooms.

- Prioritizing resource allocation: Ensure adequate funding for essential materials, technology, and personnel support to enhance effective teaching.
- Emphasizing meaningful professional development: Replace repetitive trainings with targeted, collaborative programs that directly address classroom challenges and elevate teaching practices.
- Restoring trust and value: Implement policies that demonstrate genuine appreciation for educators' expertise and contributions to student success.

The time for incremental changes and platitudes is over. We need immediate, impactful action to stem the tide of educator flight and rebuild a sustainable, nurturing environment where teachers can thrive and students can flourish.

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.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Rodriguez Martin

From: [Rebecca Dow](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] written comment opposing PED rule change to calendar
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:41:45 PM
Attachments: [written comment opposing PED rule change to calendar.docx](#)

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

Please accept the attached document for written comment regarding PED rule changes to be heard Dec 18th

Please accept this email and attached document as my opposition to the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements that removes local school board authority to set their own calendars. I strongly believe that this change is unreasonable, especially considering the recent mandate for increased hours, which hasn't had enough time to prove its effectiveness in improving student success.

One specific aspect of the proposed rule change that I strongly oppose is the elimination of four-day school weeks. I firmly believe that four-day school weeks are crucial for rural, remote, and agricultural communities. Here are several key benefits of implementing a four-day school week:

1. Cost savings: By operating buses less frequently, implementing a four-day school week can help save on transportation costs, which is particularly beneficial for students in rural areas who have to travel long distances to reach school.
2. Improved attendance: Providing students with a longer weekend can allow them more time to take care of personal matters. This leads to improved attendance rates.
3. Recruitment and retention of teachers: Rural areas often struggle with recruiting and retaining teachers. Offering a four-day school week can be an attractive perk for teachers. Additionally, a four-day school week can incentivize experienced staff who are eligible for retirement to continue working in the district.
4. Reduced burnout: School staff often experience high levels of stress and burnout due to the demanding nature of their work. Having an extra day off each week can provide them with a valuable break to rejuvenate and reduce the risk of burnout. This ultimately benefits their overall performance and job satisfaction, especially considering the long hours students spend riding buses in rural areas.
5. Potential for additional educational opportunities: With an extra day available, schools can consider offering enrichment programs, tutoring sessions, or extracurricular activities on the fifth day. This provides students who need it most with additional learning opportunities and helps bridge any educational gaps.
6. Positive environmental impact: Operating school transportation services one day less can lead to a reduction in fuel consumption and emissions, contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable environment.
7. Work-life balance for families: For families living in rural areas, a four-day school week provides more flexibility to schedule appointments, run households, farms, and ranches, and to spend quality time together without the constraints of a traditional five-day school week.

Overall, I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed rule change 6.10.5 NMAC. By allowing local school boards to retain the authority to set their calendars, you ensure that the unique needs and circumstances of each district, particularly those in rural communities, are taken into account. It is important to consider the demonstrated benefits of four-day school weeks and the potential negative consequences of removing this option. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Serving New Mexico,

Rebecca Dow

From: [Ximena Soto](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:44:47 PM

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Dear PED,

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. Therefore, to give students effective instruction, we need adequately staffed schools and 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. It seems as if these changes are being made with the failure to recognize that instruction cannot improve if there are no instructors in schools, let alone instructors who are overwhelmed over the everyday strains of their jobs. What educators need is real support in ensuring our students attend school and are ready to learn when they get there. 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.

Adult learning equals 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. This proposal is a disruption of educators' and students' lives. It feels like a false solution to a complex problem. Students need more than additional seat time to succeed. 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. To have the law ignored that was vetted and signed into law now changed arbitrarily by PED feels as if we are given no voice in changes that directly impact our job after the law was debated and it is deeply disappointing. Lawmakers' job is to fund education and it has been underfunded for years.

Sincerely,

--

Ximena Soto
Nex+gen Academy
World Studies Facilitator
Creative Writing Facilitator

From: [Carol Wilson](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PED pushing for longer school years and revamping accreditation
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:49:23 PM

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As a retired educator I applaud your proposed new rules - including both calendar and accreditation regulations. Please hold your ground; so that just maybe, our students will be able to compete in the world. Hopefully these new regulations can move us up from last place.

Thanks for your efforts.

Carol Wilson

Retired educator in both California and New Mexico

From: [Catherine Loweree Williams](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Cc: act@atfunion.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on 6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:50:13 PM

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

6.10.5 NMAC, School Calendar Requirements

Good afternoon,

I am an elementary art teacher in my 12th year of teaching in New Mexico public schools, and I must speak out vehemently against the proposal to extend the school year and add instructional days. To be perfectly blunt--if this proposal goes through, teachers will leave the profession in droves. This year we are overworked, exhausted, and trying to still help our students heal from the effects of a traumatic pandemic.

The primary factors influencing student learning are large class sizes, lack of subs and other support staff, behavior concerns, and minimal resources in our buildings. Extending the year will only magnify these problems, and will cause both teachers and students to burn out.

To be clear: extending the school year will NOT do anything to help students learn and teachers teach. It WILL do a great deal to further fracture an already strained educational culture state-wide. It will drive teachers away.

I am begging you, please do not extend the year and please abandon any thought of implementing more changes to instructional days.

With sincerity,

Catherine Loweree Williams
BA, MA Art Education

From: anneliese.kvammefamily.com
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:15:06 PM

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

To the New Mexico Public Education Department:

I am **against the proposed rule change in NMAC 6.10.5 School Calendar Requirements** that would require all school districts to move to a mandatory five-day school week.

In my twelve years teaching at Lordsburg High School, I have seen the **improvement a four-day school week can make in student engagement and productivity**, particularly in a small district in rural New Mexico. I was teaching here for the transition from a five-day school week to a four-day school week, so I saw the dramatic difference.

Unlike what most people expect, **students were able to cover more material in my classes with a four-day school week** than with a five-day school week! **Students came to school rested** after a three-day weekend and did not beg for "free days," since my students had a day to catch up on any unfinished work while still having two days left of the weekend. In addition, after the change, our **schooling was not interrupted nearly as much** by the travel schedule for football, track, or other tournaments, which almost always included Fridays. In a school as small as we are, where a large percentage of students are involved in athletics, this made a huge difference in the amount of productive class time. Having a four-day school week also meant that parents who needed to take their children out of our small town to visit orthodontists or other medical professionals **could do so outside of school hours**.

Because we have four-day school weeks, my school can offer "Friday school," half-days on one or two Fridays a month for students who choose to come in to do work or to receive extra tutoring. This is **especially advantageous for our less advantaged students** who need access to technology or tutoring in order to complete any work they were unable to finish during normal class time. We have seen a number of students take advantage of this opportunity, an opportunity they would not have available to them if we were operating on a five-day school week.

As a bonus, changing to the four-day school week gave me the ability to schedule personal appointments on Fridays **instead of having to take sick days and leaving my students with substitute teachers**. In addition, I could work on extra grading and lesson planning on Friday and thus still have my two-day weekend to rest, most weeks. Before the change from a five-day school week, I found myself using a good percentage of my weekends to

complete school-related work, especially when grading essays, a condition that had taken a toll on my mental health as a teacher and my family relationships.

Overall, **I have found the four-day school week to be advantageous** for my effectiveness as a teacher and **more especially for the improvements in attitude and productivity I have seen in my students**. While this may not be appropriate for all school districts, it has been very beneficial to Lordsburg Municipal Schools. Because of this, **I believe changing 6.10.5 NMAC to require all districts, even those in rural areas, to operate on a five-day school week would be detrimental to the teachers and students of New Mexico.**

Please consider allowing districts to maintain a four-day school week.

Thank you,
Anneliese Kvamme
Teacher, Lordsburg High School

From: [Jeff Gephart](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#); [Romero, Arsenio, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)-Animas Schools Feedback
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:26:20 PM
Attachments: [School Calendar Proposed Rule Change Feedback Letter-Animas.pdf](#)

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Secretary Arsenio Romero,

Please find the attached letter from the Animas Public Schools Board of Education regarding the proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements). I have also copied it below. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gephart

Superintendent
Animas Public Schools
575-313-4341

December 11, 2023

RE: Proposed changes in the 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements)

Dear Secretary Arsenio Romero,

Animas Public Schools strives to foster independent self-motivated learners through individualized graduation paths based on the goals and needs of each student and family, and we are getting results:

- Our schools consistently score well in the State school rating system,
- We have excellent graduation rates,
- Our students score above average on standardized tests like the SAT,
- 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.

Animas Public Schools currently operates on a four-day school week. This model meets the instructional time requirements in accordance with the current school calendar law using a

model that has met the unique needs of our farm and ranch community for several decades. Because of this, Animas Public Schools does not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements) 180 school day minimum. Additionally, this proposed change will have an alarming impact on our school, our students, our staff, and our community:

- It will hurt our ability to recruit exemplary staff.
- It will reduce educators' planning and preparation time and effectively hurt the quality of the product we are providing our community. We would be sacrificing quality for quantity.
- It will result in lost instructional time. Many of our students have family responsibilities on the ranch, on the farm, and with their families in Mexico on Friday. Additionally, our families must travel to larger towns and cities for doctor appointments on Fridays. Attendance rates will decrease on Friday due to these extenuating circumstances.
- It will add to the teacher shortage because the staff who can retire will retire.
- It will increase the inordinately long travel time for our students and their families. Our students in rural southwest New Mexico are on a school bus for up to an hour and 45 minutes each way to and from school. The proposed change would add over 100 hours of travel time each year for some of our students, but total instructional time would remain the same.
- It will compromise our ability to meet the administrative needs of our schools. In microdistricts like Animas Public Schools, all staff have an inordinate amount of responsibilities. We do not have teams of people taking care of the administrative burden of running public schools. Our administrative and maintenance staff 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 changes.

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, Animas Public Schools does not support the proposed rule change to 6.10.5 NMAC (School Calendar Requirements) 180 school day minimum.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at (575) 548-2299 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,
Animas Public Schools Board of Education

CC: NM Legislature

ANIMAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
P.O. BOX 85
1 PANTHER DR.
ANIMAS, NEW MEXICO 88020
575-548-2299

December 11, 2023

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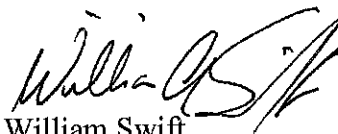
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Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at (575) 548-2299 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,



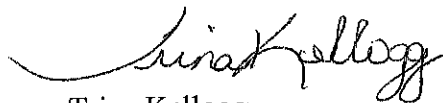
William Hurt
School Board President



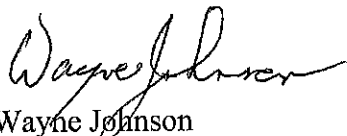
William Swift
Vice President



Jared Fralie
Secretary



Trina Kellogg
Member



Wayne Johnson
Member

CC: NM Legislators

From: [charles alexander](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cloudcroft School Week Proposal
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:36:04 PM

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I am writing against rule HB130 that is trying to force our rural community to go 180 days instead of the current schedule we have. I teach second grade at Cloudcroft Elementary School.. We are a spotlight school. . I use my Monday off to plan wonderful and science based lessons for my students as well as analyze their data. I also use Mondays to travel to doctor's appointments which are always 2 hours away. 5 day school days will negatively impact our students as teachers will be less prepared and more absent. Students also are the ones running the town. The library is only open Mondays now because a junior in high school is able to run it. Most of the waitstaff are also high school students trying to support their families. We have been this way for 13 years and we have so many transfer students here from Alamogordo. Alamogordo has a 5 day week. Yet so many parents send their kids up here for a better education. This before you just decide to randomly make rules for an entire state. What is true in Albuquerque is not the same in tiny villages! We are a tiny village and love the way it works now. This will impact everybody, bus drivers, maintenance, food service, families and students. We as a tight knit community and DO NOT SUPPORT this. Has this been voted on? Was this proposed from an elected official or a selected official? It is difficult enough to find enough qualified staff to keep the school going as it is.

Charles Alexander
Parent and husband to a teacher.

From: [Adriana Ybarra](#)
To: [FeedBack, Rule, PED](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rule Feedback for: Reference HB130
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:38:48 PM

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I am writing from a small town. I believe that this rule is unfair to smaller schools that go 4 days a week. Many enjoy the 4 day weeks and are motivated to work harder by it, we have some of the best test scores in the whole state. It should not be determined by the days, we go an extra hour to make up for the Fridays. Please take these factors into consideration