



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Instructional Hours vs. Days

Overview

- Effective **July 1, 2014**, districts and accredited nonpublic schools have the option to choose between 180 days or 1,080 hours of instruction. If a district or school chooses 1,080 hours of instruction, lunch is excluded; however, passing time or parent-teacher conferences may be included. School boards are authorized to determine the days or hours of their school calendars, but must hold a public hearing prior to adoption.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Who must meet the 1080 hours or 180 days of instruction?**
Districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and independently accredited schools must meet the 1080 hours or 180 days requirements. Specially accredited schools are not required to meet this requirement.
- **When are districts, accredited nonpublic schools or independently accredited schools required to submit calendar information to the Department of Education?**
For the 2014-2015 school year the deadline to submit the district/school's decision on 1080 hours or 180 days, early start date (before the first Monday in September) and innovative calendar is **March 1, 2014**. For the 2015-2016 school year and subsequent years, the deadline is November 1st.
- **Will districts, accredited nonpublic schools or independently accredited schools selecting 1080 hours need to apply for an innovative calendar waiver?**
No. Districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools using the 1080 hours must meet the hours of instruction. If the districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools goes longer than 1080 hours the districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools does not need a waiver. The innovative calendar waiver would only apply to Districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools requesting to meet less than the 180 days.
- **Where does the 6 hour minimum come from?**
House File 215, passed earlier this year in the legislative process struck the 5 ½ minimum hours for a districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools using 180 day calendar. However, 1080 hours divided by 180 days is 6 hours a day. Both the 1080 hours and 180 days models will be required to have the same amount of instructional time. For districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools using the 1080 hours of instruction the district does not need to meet the 6 hour minimum day. For Districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools using the 1080 hours of instruction there is no minimum or maximum day length. Day length is a local district, accredited nonpublic school, or independently accredited school decision and may vary. It does average 6 hours a day but the only number we are interested in is the annual sum of hours that your districts, accredited nonpublic schools, and independently accredited schools has documented to meet 1,080 hours.
- **Who must apply for an early start date waiver?**
School districts starting before the first Monday in September must complete an early start date waiver. Iowa Code does not allow accredited nonpublic or independently accredited schools to apply for an early start date waiver.
- **Who should the district, accredited nonpublic school and independently accredited school contact regarding the school waiver?**
Amy Williamson, School Improvement Bureau Chief, amy.williamson@iowa.gov

- **Is a public hearing required before a school district establishes a calendar?**
Yes. School districts are required to hold a public hearing for the calendar. This hearing may include start date and hours vs. days. Accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools are not required to hold public meeting.
- **May districts, accredited nonpublic schools, or independently accredited schools count parent-teacher conferences toward the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 days?**
Yes. Parent-teacher conference may count toward the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 day requirement.
- **What happens if a district/school encounters inclement weather?**
 - Due to changes in House File 215, districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools using 1080 hours must count the time of instruction. For example if a district/school starts at 8:00 but releases at 10:00 due to inclement weather they may only count 2 hours of instruction.
 - Due to changes in House File 215, districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools, using 180 days must have 6 hours of instruction to count the day. For example if a Districts, accredited nonpublic schools and independently accredited schools starts at 8:00 but releases at 10:00 due to inclement weather the day does not count toward the 180 days because it was less than 6 hours.

The Department of Education encourages districts/schools to build in a buffer to ensure they meet the minimum hour or day requirements.
- **May a district/school count professional development toward the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 days?**
No
- **May a district/school count lunch toward the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 days?**
No
- **May a district/school count passing time toward the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 days?**
Yes
- **If a district/school has multiple attendance centers which center is used to determine minutes of instruction per day to meet the 1080 hours of instruction or 6 hours toward 180 days?**
The center that meets the least amount of time per day will be the one that will be used to count toward the 1080 hours or 6 hour minimum per day for districts/schools looking at 180 days.
- **Can a district with multiple buildings put some buildings on hours and some on days?**
No
- **Iowa Administrative Code section 281-12(9) states a school day may be less than 5 ½ hours of instruction if the previous 5 consecutive days equal 27 ½ hours. Is this rule still in effect?**
Due to changes in House File 215, this is no longer an option. However this may be reinstated during the 2014 legislative session.
- **May a district, accredited nonpublic school, or independently accredited school using the 180 day calendar that exceeds the 6 hour minimum count the extra hours toward one of the 180 day count?**
No. A district, accredited nonpublic school, or independently accredited school using the 180 day calendar must meet 180 days for at least 6 hours.
- **When will these changes take effect?**
July 1, 2014.
- **Is there a requirement that lunch must be served if the school is session for a certain amount of time?**
Iowa Administrative Code section 281-58.7 states a district shall provide a lunch program for all students if the school is in session for 4 or more hours.

Chart

	1080 Hours	180 Days
Parent-teacher conferences	Yes	Yes
What is an hour and day	Hour is 60 minutes of instruction, excluding lunch.	Day is 6 hours of instruction, excluding lunch.
Lunch	No	No
Passing time	Yes	Yes
Minimum hours	No minimums	6 hours
Professional Development	No, may not be counted	No, may not be counted
Emergency Closing for one attendance center	Count the hours the center was in attendance	Must meet 6 hours to count as a day
What building do we count when it comes to instructional hours	The building with the least amount of instructional hours.	The building with the least amount of instructional hours. The minimum must be at least 6 hours per day.
Early outs	Only instruction time counts toward 1080 hours.	Must provide 6 hours of instruction for the day to count.
Early Start date	Must have an early start waiver	Must have an early start waiver

HF 215 Language

DIVISION IX

INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS

Sec. 79. Section 256.7, subsection 19, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

19. ~~Define the minimum school day as a day consisting of five and one-half hours of instructional time for grades one through twelve. The minimum days or hours as time that shall be exclusive of the lunch period, but may include passing time between classes. Time spent on parent-teacher conferences shall be considered instructional time. A school or school district may record a day of school with less than the minimum instructional hours as a minimum school day if any of the following apply:~~

- ~~a. If emergency health or safety factors require the late arrival or early dismissal of students on a specific day.~~
- ~~b. If the total hours of instructional school time for grades one through twelve for any five consecutive school days equal a minimum of twenty-seven and one-half hours, even though any one day of school is less than the minimum instructional hours because of a staff development opportunity provided for the professional instructional staff or because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day. Furthermore, if the total hours of instructional time for the first four consecutive days equal at least twenty-seven and one-half hours because parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled beyond the regular school day, a school or school district may record zero hours of instructional time on the fifth consecutive school day as a minimum school day.~~

Sec. 80. Section 256F.4, subsection 5, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

5. A charter school or innovation zone school shall provide instruction for at least the number of days or hours required by section 279.10, subsection 1, ~~or shall provide at least the equivalent number of total hours.~~

Sec. 81. Section 279.10, subsection 1, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

1. ~~The school year for each school district and accredited nonpublic school shall begin on the first day of July 1 and each regularly established elementary and secondary school shall begin no sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first day of September falls but no later than the first Monday in December. However, if the first day of September falls on a Sunday, school may begin on a day during the calendar week which immediately precedes the first day of September. School shall continue for at least one hundred eighty days, except as provided in subsection 3, and may be maintained~~ The school calendar shall include not less than one hundred eighty days, except as provided in subsection 3, or one thousand eighty hours of instruction during the entire calendar year. However, if The board of directors of a school district and the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school shall set the number of days

or hours of required attendance for the school year as provided in section 299.1, subsection 2, but the board of directors of a school district shall hold a public hearing on any proposed school calendar prior to adopting the school calendar. If the board of directors of a district or the authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school extends the school calendar because inclement weather caused the school district or accredited nonpublic school to temporarily close school during the regular school calendar, the school district or accredited nonpublic school may excuse a graduating senior who has met district or school requirements for graduation from attendance during the extended school calendar. A school corporation may begin employment of personnel for in-service training and development purposes before the date to begin elementary and secondary school.

Sec. 82. Section 279.10, subsection 2, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

2. The board of directors shall hold a public hearing on any proposal relating to the school calendar prior to submitting it to the department of education for approval.

Sec. 83. Section 299.1, subsection 2, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

2. The board of directors of a public school district or the governing body of an accredited nonpublic school shall set the number of days or hours of required attendance for the schools under its control. The board of directors of a public school district or the governing body of an accredited nonpublic school may, by resolution, require attendance for the entire time when the schools are in session in any school year and adopt a policy or rules relating to the reasons considered to be valid or acceptable excuses for absence from school.

Sec. 84. Section 299.4, subsection 1, Code 2013, is amended to read as follows:

1. The parent, guardian, or legal custodian of a child who is of compulsory attendance age, who places the child under competent private instruction under either section 299A.2 or 299A.3, not in an accredited school or a home school assistance program operated by a school district or accredited nonpublic school, shall furnish a report in duplicate on forms provided by the public school district, to the district by ~~the earliest starting date specified in section 279.10, subsection 4~~

Sec. 85. EFFECTIVE DATE. This division of this Act takes effect July 1, 2014.