

Forsyth 4-Day Week Community Night Summary of Questions

Will we offer tutoring on Fridays?

With the change in the calendar, we will be altering the ways we offer tutoring to make sure that students can receive the help they need. I would expect that we will expand tutoring to Fridays to meet that need.

What do you see being the biggest road block for the district that we don't have a solution for at this time?

The concern we would have would be for students who do not have a plan in place as of yet on that extra day off. We are lucky, however, to be able to partner with the Boy's and Girl's Club to support those students.

Do you think it is really teaching our kids and preparing them for the real world by going to 4 days instead of 5 days?

Our goal is to equip students for their next stage in life. We want to develop students who can compete for jobs that are not bound or limited by a work week that was modeled so long ago. We are preparing students for jobs that do not even exist yet. If we create students who are critical thinkers and problem solvers, they will be able to be competitive in a world economy and job market that continues to evolve.

Are the teachers leaving the community to go out of state or leaving to go to Branson?

When teachers and employees leave, it is for a variety of reasons. Family, spouse job transfers, and others, however, we also lose employees to other districts who can provide a more attractive financial package. We work hard to be as competitive as we can with salaries but there are boundaries to our abilities. We are looking outside of the box to provide means to attract high quality applicants for jobs when they come open.

Boy's and Girl's Club – Have they committed to being open to every Monday that the school is not in session?

The Boy's and Girl's Club of Forsyth is committed to serving our students when school is not in session.

Your hourly staff count on 40 hours for their paycheck. Will that be balanced out for them because they count on that paycheck?

Our hourly staff will not see a reduction in pay with this change. We will amend hours and schedules that will keep their take home pay the same.

During the research, what percentage of increase did they see in their Boys' and Girl's club?

Are they prepared and equipped for a substantial increase in kids?

None of the other districts we studied have a Boy's and Girl's Club in their community so we do not have that data. We do know that our local club is prepared and equipped for a large increase in enrollment.

How will transportation to sending schools work with the change in day length?

We will partner with our sending schools, as we do now, to work out those schedules.

If we do this, and next year other area schools do this, then is this benefit only good for one year?

The motivation for this change is to increase attendance (of students and staff), give staff time to collaborate and prepare for high quality instruction, to recruit and retain high quality teachers, and increase quality time for students to spend with their families.

Do you have statistics of teachers wanting to apply to 4-day school districts?

All districts that we have researched have seen an increase in applications for open positions as well as fewer employees leaving the district after adopting the 4-day week calendar.

My students are involved in outside activities in Branson. On the days of the activities I will need to pick them up 15/20 minutes early on Mondays and Fridays. Will the kids be docked for that?

Attendance policies will remain the same.

What is the next avenue if the district does not go forward with a 4-day school week?

We are committed to following through with our research and collecting input from our community until we reach a decision if the 4-day week is right for us. If we were to reach a point to where we no longer feel that this move would be the best for our district then we will step back and take a look at what other options might be there to meet the needs we have identified.

One of your big selling points I like is Monday appointments and have you communicated with doctors in the area so they can be prepared?

This is not something that we have done as of yet but we feel like it is a good idea and we will do so with local providers if we move forward.

Any idea of times that buses will run for Cedar Creek kids?

We are currently working to evaluate those routes to minimize the impact on those kids who have a long ride. We are still working on that information. Overall, students should spend less time each week riding the bus.

How does this work on the athletic side with such long travel games and the amount of homework the kids have and making sure the kids don't miss a lot of last hour to leave for these trips?

We have presented a balanced split of the additional time to the day so that we would not have students missing any more time from instruction than necessary. We will work to set our leave times for travel to keep students in class as long as possible. We also will try and use Mondays for longer travel days if possible.

Will it cause a hardship for kids involved with youth groups on Wednesdays when practice does not get out until 5:30-5:45?

Our coaches and teachers work to try and make sure that students are done with afterschool events on Wednesdays in time to make it to evening activities in the community. That work will continue.

Have you looked at doing an A/B (Block) schedule for high school?

The block schedule is not an option for us due to the fact that we share a high number of teachers in multiple buildings.

Is this something the community is going to vote on or is this something administration is going to decide on?

Now that we have shared information with our staff, students, and community, we will share a survey that will collect the community input on the proposed calendar. The board will review this data and make our decision based on that information. We approve a calendar each year as a board meeting item.

As far as Mondays and there being extra-curricular activities going on, what about families who can't get their child to the bus that leaves at 2:00. Have you looked at not doing any extra-curricular activities on Monday?

We will continue to have extra-curricular events on Mondays to adhere to MSHSAA event schedules as well as to align with other school's events. All schools that have a 4-day week continue to have extra-curricular events on Mondays.

Have there been any studies on the idle time kids have from the schools that have gone 4 days– pregnancy, crimes, drugs?

We have not focused on completing this study as the day out would mirror currently scheduled days when students are not in school.

Is every school board member in favor of this?

We brought this discussion to the community after all board members agreed to continuing the research into this possible change.

How will you be able to help the children that are not on your high spectrum?

Students with I.E.P.s will have minutes adjusted to meet needs based on the calendar changes. Student's needs will still be met.

At what level are you experiencing problems hiring your teachers?

We, as well as the rest of the state, are seeing a decrease in applicants in all areas and grade levels of teaching.

My son has a learning disability and he is in elementary. You want these teachers that are good but have you looked at creating teachers into what you want them to be on those 9 work days?

We already use our professional development to improve our teachers and we would continue that process. We are proposing this change to bring more applicants to the table when ours leave for some reason.

What are you going to do for the kids that need more learning time not necessarily a longer day?

With the additional time each day we can actually provide more learning time for students. We will spread the additional time throughout the classes during the day. We will also decrease disruptions by changing some of our procedures.

With the savings that you get how will you put that money back into the school?

We will put those savings back into instruction and student support. We will determine exactly how that will be used when we see a more exact savings amount.

How much of the approval from parents will be needed? If parents don't approve, will the board of education still move forward and approve the 4-day week?

We have not set a hard number for approval. We will review the survey data and continue discussions from there. Our board is a representation of our community. They will make decisions in a manner consistent with the majority of the community's input.

If we do this for a year or two is it hard to go back to a 5-day week?

We approve school calendars yearly so it could be transitioned back if needed, however, of 62 districts across the state of Missouri, only 1 district has transitioned back to a 5-day week.