

SLIDELL ISD

Town Hall Calendar Feed
Back (Feb 18th)

For the 2026 - 2027
School Year

Parent with children in both a 4-day and 5-day district:

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- Shared positive personal experiences with the 4-day week.
 - Reported improved mental health and academic performance for her daughter.
 - Noted benefits for athletics, including less rushed travel and more rest.
 - Appointments were scheduled on Fridays, reducing missed instructional time.
 - Appreciated increased family time and flexibility.
 - Stated she has not seen a district return from a 4-day week to 5 days.
 - Acknowledged that both she and her husband work full-time but emphasized that “parents figure it out.”
 - Shared that her son would consider transferring to a 4-day district.

Former Educator/Coach (20+ years in education):

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- Spoke about teacher retention challenges.
 - Shared examples from other districts that saw academic improvement (one improving from a B to an A- rating).
 - Noted athletic success in districts on a 4-day week.
 - Referenced conversations with administrators at Graford ISD regarding childcare, stating families adapt.
 - Highlighted student mental health and the demands placed on small-school students who participate in multiple activities.
 - Emphasized teacher morale and the competitive hiring environment.
 - Expressed concern that remaining a 5-day district while surrounding districts move to 4 days could hinder recruitment.

Parent with Colorado experience:

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- Shared that a 4-day schedule supported agricultural students who needed time to care for and show animals.
 - Reported the district continues the model successfully and has for 20+ years.

Elementary teacher (recent Master's graduate):

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- Shared data on declining enrollment in teacher preparation programs.
 - Emphasized the shrinking teacher pool and recruitment challenges.
 - Stated that families and schools adjust and make schedules work.
 - Referenced family members' positive experiences with 4-day weeks.

Research Contribution:



- A parent offered peer-reviewed scientific research to share with administration for reasons to not move to a 4 day week calendar..
- Dr. Heskett requested the research be submitted so leadership can review all perspectives and make an informed decision.

Survey & Data Discussion



- Clarification was provided that the initial survey was sent to staff prior to broader community distribution.
- Mrs. Stevens shared where to find the shared teacher survey results and graphs.
- Participants discussed the importance of consistency in scheduling.
- Administration affirmed that consistency will be a priority in ongoing review with leadership, the Board, and the DEIC.

Instructional Impact & Focus Fridays:



- A parent questioned how a 4-day week would differ from last year's Focus Fridays and how that impacted academic scores.
- Administration acknowledged that Focus Fridays did not work as intended because instructional minutes were not redistributed into the remaining week, resulting in lost instructional time.
- Staff survey feedback showed Focus Fridays were not supported.
- Administration clarified that a 4-day calendar would protect instructional minutes by redistributing them across four full days and would not replicate the Focus Friday model.

Childcare & Transportation:



- Concerns were raised about single parents and transportation challenges, particularly in rural areas.
- Some feedback from neighboring districts indicated morale improvements for teachers, though mixed perceptions on student benefit.
- Adjustment challenges were mentioned for some younger students, while older students reportedly thrived.

Schedule Consistency:



- A parent emphasized the need for a consistent schedule (avoiding multiple dismissal times).
- Another participant mentioned they would miss Fall Break.

Creativity & Instructional Design:



- Mr. Hayhurst discussed creative scheduling and ensuring students are not sitting for long, uninterrupted periods.

Recruitment & Retention:



- Multiple staff members spoke to emphasized the competitive disadvantage of remaining a 5-day district while neighboring districts transition.
- Dr. Heskett shared that districts such as Alvord ISD are in the process of transitioning, and surrounding districts have already done so.
- Staff expressed that recruitment is increasingly difficult and that a 4-day week may provide a competitive advantage.
- An elementary teacher shared it is tempting to move to nearby districts offering significantly higher pay and a 4-day week.
- A staff member noted that getting teachers “in the door” is the hardest part.

Mental Health & Workload:



- A former 4-day employee shared personal positive mental health benefits.
- Comparison was made to COVID-era adjustments, noting that districts now have the benefit of researching and planning proactively.

Kindergarten Perspective:



- A kindergarten teacher emphasized play-based learning and clarified that students are not seated all day.
- Shared that additional minutes would allow for structured play and instruction.
- Encouraged unity and cautioned against allowing the issue to divide the community.

Administrative Planning:



- An administrative staff member emphasized that this proposal has involved extensive research, planning, and data collection.
- Shared appreciation for leadership’s thorough consideration of both student and staff impact.

Campus Admin Perspective:



- Mrs. Luig stated she has remained neutral and open-minded.
- Emphasized her responsibility to advocate for students by securing the best educators possible.
- Noted the competitive challenges faced if Slidell does not adapt.

Non-Certified Staff Member:



- She shared she chose Slidell over nearby districts because of the staff’s care for students.
- Expressed concern about the limited pool of available teachers.
- Emphasized the importance of strengthening recruitment.