

# SLIDELL ISD

## Calendar FAQ

2026 - 2027

### Frequently Asked Questions (after town hall meetings and more conversations from other 4 day districts)

As part of our continued commitment to transparency and stakeholder input, Slidell ISD has hosted multiple town halls, met with neighboring districts, reviewed research, and gathered staff and community feedback.

Before any recommendation is made, we are providing one final opportunity for families to share input through a survey.

Below is a compiled FAQ based on questions, comments, and discussions from town halls and district meetings.

#### Why is Slidell ISD exploring a 4-day school week?

The primary reason for exploration is recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers, particularly as many surrounding districts have transitioned or are considering transitioning to a 4-day calendar.

Districts we have consulted with include:

- Alvord ISD
- Graford ISD
- Chico ISD
- Sanger ISD
- Decatur ISD



Many of these districts report:

- Increased applicant pools
- Improved staff morale
- Stable or improved attendance
- No significant negative impact on academics

## How would instructional minutes be protected?

A 4-day week would not replicate last year's Focus Friday model.

Instead:



- Instructional minutes would be redistributed across four full days.
- Approximately 25 minutes would be added to each school day.
- Core subjects are considering being front-loaded as much as possible for the younger grades when looking at master schedules.
- Schedules would be intentionally designed to eliminate “lost time.”

Districts like Graford ISD report that protecting pacing, and tightening lesson design were critical to success.

## What would start and end times look like?

Current draft considerations include:



- Student start date around early August.
- Start time approximately moves up as early as 7:40. Our current start time is 7:55
- About 25 additional minutes added to each day

These are drafts only and would be finalized after Board consideration and additional input.

## How would elementary students handle longer days?

Based on feedback from Graford ISD and Chico ISD, the following recommendations were made:



- Core subjects for younger grades are scheduled more heavily in the morning.
- Recess and movement breaks are intentionally built in. We plan to continue this, and look at how we can improve this mindset to best meet the needs of our students with longer days.
- Nap times for PK may be adjusted.
- Structured play remains part of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten learning. Regardless of the length of day, students are not sitting in chairs for the entire day. Our teachers of our younger students recognize using best practices for keeping students engaged and learning age appropriately.

Both districts reported that younger students acclimated well when schedules were intentionally designed.

## What about childcare?

Childcare has been the #1 concern in nearly every district explored.

What we've learned:

- Initial interest is often higher than long-term need.
- Some districts offered optional half-day Fridays with volunteers.
- Some communities did not ultimately require district-provided childcare.
- Families in other districts reported adapting over time.
- All Districts reported that childcare was eliminated as a need after the first 6 weeks timeline.

Nearby communities such as Sanger, Krum, Decatur, Valley View, and Bridgeport offer childcare options.



## How would this impact athletics and extracurricular activities?

Districts consulted report:

- No negative athletic impact.
- Coaches often support the model due to recovery time and flexibility.
- Practices, walk-throughs, or team meals may occur on Fridays. Coaches reported seeing an increase in team morale overall.
- Participation expectations would be determined by sponsors and directors.

Programs under review include:

- Athletics
- UIL Academic
- OAP
- FFA/Ag
- Robotics
- Esports
- NHS/Student Council

Extracurricular impacts will be evaluated carefully before any implementation.



## What about meals for students in need?

Slidell ISD would continue:

- Partnering with Feeding Wise Kids
- Providing support similar to long weekends and breaks

Other districts continue similar support models successfully.



## How will academics be monitored?

If implemented, the district would monitor:

- STAAR performance trends
- Student attendance
- Staff retention
- Student and Staff leaver trends
- Longitudinal academic growth



For example, Graford ISD reported improvement from a D/F rating to an A rating after implementing structured instructional protections. Other districts report stable scores with no negative impact.

The goal is not correlation alone, but reviewing multiple data indicators over time.

## What about teacher retention and turnover?

Neighboring districts report significantly stronger applicant pools after moving to a 4-day week. Some districts now fill positions by spring rather than late summer.

Remaining a 5-day district while surrounding districts move to 4 days may create competitive disadvantages in recruitment.



## Was communication provided in Spanish?

Yes, and we are strengthening our efforts.

Steps taken:

- Spanish-language family information night
- Translation of flyers and social media posts
- Direct outreach through Mrs. Fernandez
- Expanded distribution across multiple platforms
- Paper flyers with QR codes sent home



We are committed to equitable communication and access.

## Will Fridays ever be used for school?

Other districts:

- Schedule occasional PD Fridays. If approved, Slidell plans to implement a once a month PD Friday to frequently support staff, and monitor academic progress.
- Avoid three-day weeks when Monday holidays occur if Friday is the day the district selects.
- All schools reported to build “banked” instructional minutes into calendars when needed. The community knows that any time needed to be made up will be made up on the day selected.

No final calendar has been adopted.



### Could we return to a 5-day week if needed?



Very few districts that move to a 4-day model return to a 5-day schedule. However, any calendar decision is ultimately made by the School Board and can be revisited if necessary. Districts reported giving staff and community the typical 3 year commitment prior to any changes. The first year will be the biggest adjustment for all stakeholders. The three year consideration will allow improvements to be implemented.

### What are potential challenges?



We recognize potential concerns:

- Childcare access
- Adjustment period (especially year one)
- Longer school days
- Consistency in scheduling
- Impact on hourly employees

These challenges are being studied carefully through district visits, data review, and stakeholder input.

### What happens next?



Before any recommendation is made:

- This final survey will collect additional stakeholder input.
- Administration will compile data.
- Findings will be reviewed with leadership, DEIC, and the School Board.