

# Exploring 4DSW Adoption in Texas

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University of Houston Education Research Center

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# WORKING PAPER

## Exploring Four-Day School Week Adoption in Texas


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Working Paper #101-25  
Version 1.0


## UH-ERC Publications and Reports

To attain the University of Houston Education Research Center's (UH ERC) ultimate goal of improving education in Texas and beyond, the UH ERC research team engages in the exploration and study of a wide range of education policies, practices, and issues. This page displays reports commissioned from the UH ERC, as well as academic paper publications and work presented by our research team.

### Publications

- Francis, S. S. & Mairaj, F. (2025). From theory to practice: Logic models for evaluating portfolio school districts. *Texas Education Review*, 13(1), 24-49. <https://doi.org/10.26153/tsw/58406>
- Mairaj, Fiza. (2024). Lacking Accountability and Effectiveness Measures: Exploring the Implementation of Mentoring Programs for Refugee Youth. *Social Sciences* 13: 586. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13110586>.
- Templeton, T. (2024). "Colorado." *State of the States Special Issue. Journal of Education Human Resources. Volume 24 Issue s1, pp.25-27*. DOI: 10.3138/jehr-2023-0090.
- Templeton, T., Selsberg, B., Abdelmalak, M., & Abdelhamid, M. (2023).  *Feast or Famine. Inequity within the Texas School Finance System. Journal of Education Finance, 49(2), 176-199.*

### Working Papers

- Priyanti, N., Mairaj, F., & Templeton, T.  *Exploring Four Day School Week Adoption in Texas. University of Houston Education Research Center Working Paper 101-25. February 2025.*
  - University of Houston Education Research Center Four Day School Week Dataset, March 2025.

# University of Houston Education Research Center

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- UH ERC is one of 3 statewide individual-level data repositories that houses data from the Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Workforce Commission
- Repository allows for individuals to be tracked from their entry into the K-12 system, through higher education, and into the workforce.
- <https://www.uh.edu/education/research/institutes-centers/erc/>



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Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

# Four Day School Weeks (4DSW)

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- 4DSW adoption is growing nation-wide
  - 2018-29: 1,600 4DSW schools
- 2015 Policy Changes made 4DSW possible in Texas
  - HB 2610: Shifted instructional requirements from days (180) to minutes (75,600 per year)
  - HB 1842: Created the District of Innovation (DOI) program, allowing policy exemptions



# Exploring 4DSW in Texas

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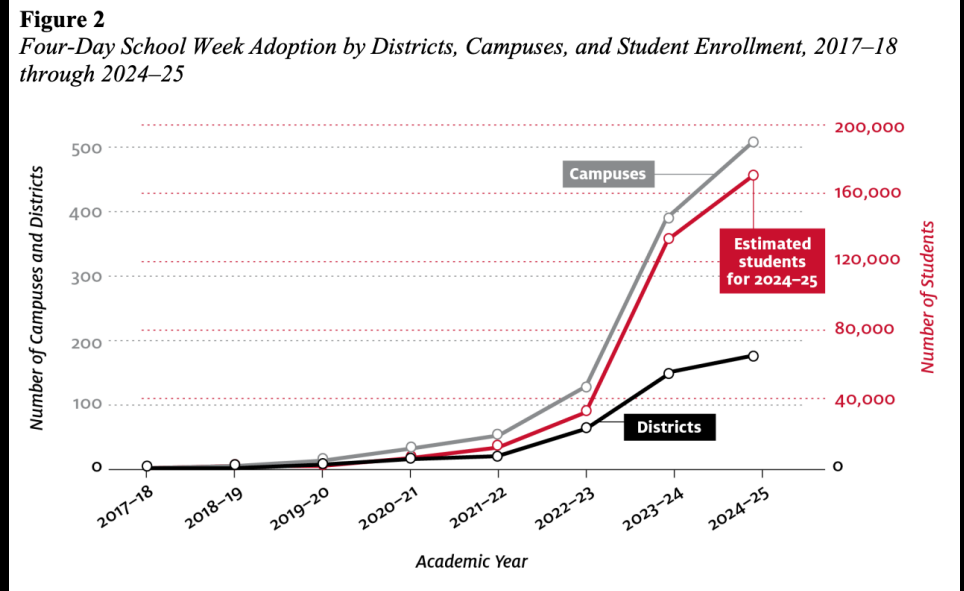
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- TEA does not collect data on 4DSW adoption specifically
- Collected school calendars of all 1,021 school districts to identify 4DSW school districts
- Created publicly-available dataset that combined collected 4DSW information, as well as administrative and demographic data for each district
- Dataset available for download on UH ERC website



# 4DSW in Texas

4DSW popularity in Texas has grown substantially since 2022-23



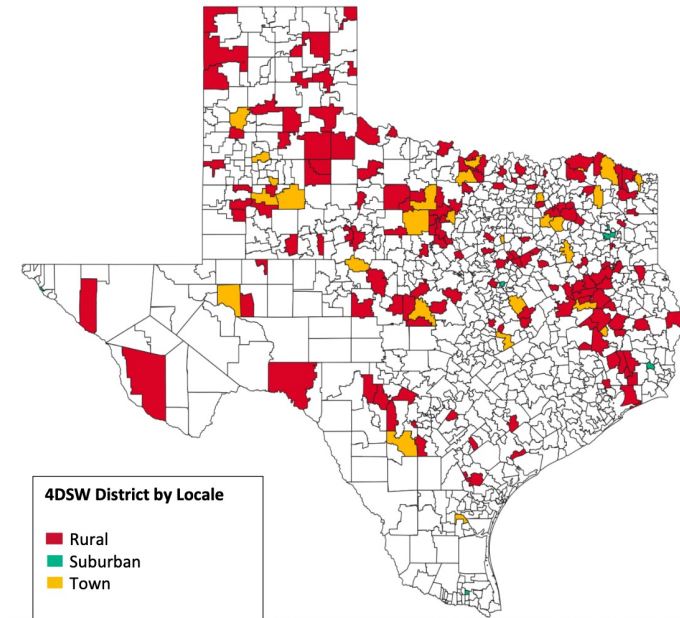
# 4DSW in Texas - Geography

4DSW adoption is largely present in rural Texas

Count of Four-Day School Week Districts, Campuses, and Students by Locale, 2023–24

Locale	Districts	Campuses	Students
Rural	129	279	85,361
Suburban	4	21	10,412
Town	23	89	38,467
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>134,240</b>

Figure 3  
Map of Texas Four-Day School Week School Districts by Locale as of 2024-25



Sources: National Center for Education Statistics publicly available data and University of Houston Education Research Center primary data collection and analysis.

# 4DSW in Texas- Demographics

4DSW school districts serve a student population composed of larger populations of White students and smaller populations of Limited English Proficient students than the state

**Table 2**

*Average Student Race/Ethnicity Served in Four-Day School Week Districts by Locale, 2023–24*

Locale	Another Race or Ethnicity	Black	Hispanic	White
Rural	4.1%	5.2%	31.5%	59.2%
Suburban	2.4%	9.4%	62.0%	26.2%
Town	4.5%	8.8%	46.3%	40.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>34.4%</b>	<b>55.5%</b>

**Table 3**

*Average Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, and Limited English Proficient Students Served in Four-Day School Week Districts by Locale, 2023–24*

Locale	Economically Disadvantaged	Special Education	Limited English Proficient
Rural	61.4%	16.0%	7.0%
Suburban	75.6%	14.9%	24.9%
Town	71.3%	15.5%	15.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.2%</b>	<b>15.9%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>





# Typologies of Texas 4DSW

- Full 4DSW
  - Schedule a 4DSW for at least 30 four-day weeks; Maintain a regular day off throughout the school year
- Hybrid/Modified 4DSW
  - Schedule a 4DSW for less than 30 four-day week and more often than traditionally observed holidays; No regular day off throughout the school year

*Typologies of the Four-Day School Week by Locale, 2024–25*

Type of School	4DSW School Districts	Percentage of 4DSW School Districts
<b>Full 4DSW</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>80.1%</b>
Town	21	11.6%
Rural	122	67.4%
Suburb	2	1.1%
<b>Hybrid/Modified</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19.9%</b>
Town	7	3.9%
Rural	26	14.4%
Suburb	3	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Sources:* National Center for Education Statistics and University of Houston Education Research Center primary data collection and analysis



# Full 4DSW Schedule

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- Most full 4DSW school districts (73.8%) take Fridays off, 22.1% take Mondays off, and 4.1% alternate between taking Mondays and Fridays off
- Longer school hours, anywhere from 470 to 530 minutes per day, an increase of 50 to 110 minutes per day compared to traditional school districts (420 minutes of instruction per day)
- Some Full 4DSW districts also choose to begin the academic year one or two weeks earlier than the state's mandated start day



# Hybrid 4DSW Schedule

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- 80.6% of districts (29) have their off day on Friday, 11.1% (four) have it on Monday, and 8.3% (three) alternate days
- Hybrid 4DSW districts have relatively shorter school hours compared with full 4DSW districts, between 460 and 515 minutes a day, an increase of 40 to 95 minutes daily compared to traditional school districts (420 minutes of instruction daily)
- Begin the academic year one or two weeks earlier than the state's mandated start date, with some choosing to start the second week of August



# Full 4DSW Use of 5<sup>th</sup> Day

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- Teacher Focus
  - The majority of the school districts adopting the full 4DSW calendar (93.9%, 136 districts) reserve the off day for professional development, teacher in-service, workdays, or collaborative planning for their teachers and staff
  - 75.9% allocate their professional development regularly, such as every off day (0.7%, one school district), once a month (65.5%, 95 school districts), once to twice a month (6.2%, nine districts), or twice a month (3.5%, five districts)
  - 17.9% have a flexible approach to scheduling their professional development for teachers/staff
  - Fewer off days for teachers/staff, varying between one day to six days a year
  - 6.2% do not allocate any of the off days for teacher/staff development on their calendars
- Student Focus
  - 17.3% of full 4DSW districts offered support to students on the 5<sup>th</sup> day
  - Some school districts reserve this tutorial time for selected students, typically for at-risk students or those seeking academic support



# Hybrid 4DSW Use of 5<sup>th</sup> Day

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- Teacher Focus
  - 88.9% of school districts (32) adopting the hybrid 4DSW model reserve their off days for teacher-centered activities such as professional development, workdays, in-service activities, or collaborative planning
  - More than half of the total districts (55.6%), provide these professional development days more regularly, most of them once a month
  - 33.3% adopt a flexible approach, adjusting their schedule to meet their unique needs and local contexts
  - 11.1% reserve no teacher-centered activities on their fifth day
- Student Focus
  - 8.3% of full 4DSW districts offered support to students on the 5<sup>th</sup> day
  - Some school districts reserve this tutorial time for selected students, typically for at-risk students or those seeking academic support



# Key Findings

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- 4DSW are more prevalent in rural and small-sized districts (81.8%)
- 4DSW districts have higher proportions of White students (55.5% v 26.7% statewide) and lower proportion of ELL students (8.7% vs 26.6% statewide)
- Variability in implementation across districts
  - Full v Hybrid 4DSW models, differences in off-day selection
- The model is primarily teacher-centered
  - 92.8% provide teacher professional development vs 15.5 provide intervention and enrichment programs for students



# Contact Us

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