

OVERVIEW

Idaho Code 33-512(1) requires schools to annually adopt and implement a school calendar which provides the following minimum number of instructional hours:

<u>Grade(s)</u>	<u>Required Instructional Hours</u>
12	979
9 – 11	990
4 – 8	900
1 – 3	810
K	450

Instructional hours include the time when students are under the guidance and direction of teachers engaged in the teaching process. School assemblies, testing, and other instructionally related activities directly involving students may be included as instructional hours. Lunch periods, breaks, recess, passing time, etc. should not be counted as instructional time.

CALCULATING TOTAL HOURS OF PLANNED INSTRUCTION

Calculating the number of hours of instruction offered for each grade grouping is a multi-step process. A school district / charter school with multiple buildings will need to work with each building individually to determine the exact hours and minutes of instruction for a “regular” day of instruction.

If the exact same hours and minutes of instruction are offered to more than one grade grouping, then only one calendar needs to be completed for those grades. Remember to cross out the grade grouping at the top of the calendar and indicate the appropriate grade grouping. For example, if grades 1 – 6 have the exact same schedule, cross out Grades 4 – 8 on the calendar form and write Grades 1 – 6. It is not often that the hours/minutes of instruction will be exactly the same for all grades (K – 12) even if they all share the same start- and end-times since lower grades have recesses and higher grades have passing times.

This manual refers to specific line numbers found on the calendar forms. Below is an example of these lines taken from the Grades 9 – 11 calendar form:

- | | Decimal
Equivalent |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Number of hours of instruction per regular day:
(REQUIRED: _____ Hrs. _____ Min.) | _____ Hrs. |
| 2. Number of regular days of instruction planned: | _____ |
| 3. Total number of regular hours of instruction:
(Line 1 x Line 2) | _____ Hrs. |
| 4. Number of hours of instruction for shortened days :
(Total from below.) | _____ Hrs. |

5. Total hours of **staff development**: (Total from below.) _____ Hrs.
 (Up to 22 hours for Grades 1 -12, 11 hours for Kinder.)
6. Total hours of instruction planned during 2008-2009: _____ Hrs.
 (Lines 3 + 4 + 5)
7. State **minimum** hours required for **Grades 9 - 11**: _____ 990 Hrs.

Line 1. Number of hours of instruction per regular day

- This first step determines the number of hours and minutes of instruction for a **regular** day of instruction.
- Convert the hours and minutes to decimal format. For example, a five hour, 35 minute day of instruction would be reported as 5.583 hours (five hours plus 35 minutes / 60 minutes = 5.583).
- Round to three decimal places.
- Early release days and delayed-start days are not regular days of instruction and those instructional hours should not be included on Line 1. Instead, the hours will be included on Line 4.

Line 2. Number of regular days of instruction planned

- Include only **regular** days of instruction on this line.
- Regular days of instruction include any day not marked with a circle (indicating a shortened session), a triangle (indicating staff development), or a box with an X (indicating a holiday/vacation day).
- **Do not** include any day where the scheduled hours of instruction are less than the regularly scheduled hours of instruction shown on Line 1. Any day with less than the regular hours of instruction planned is a shortened day and will be included on Line 4.

Line 3. Total number of regular hours of instruction

- Multiply the hours of instruction for a regular day (Line 1) by the number of regular days of instruction planned (Line 2).
- Make sure the hours and minutes of instruction planned on Line 1 were converted to a decimal equivalent and were rounded to three decimal places.

Line 4. Number of hours of instruction for shortened days (Total from below)

- All shortened days should be recorded in the grid at the bottom of the calendar form. (Shortened sessions should be indicated with a circle on the calendar.)
- ANY day having less instructional hours than a regular day of instruction (regular hours are indicated on Line 1) should be included in the grid. Common examples include early release before a holiday or break, early release to allow time for staff development, and delayed starts to allow for staff development.
- Show the dates of shortened day in the first column, the hours and minutes of planned instructional hours for each shortened day in the second column, and the decimal equivalent of those hours and minutes in the third column of the grid (at the bottom of the calendar form).

Line 7. State **minimum** hours required for (grade grouping) students

- Compare the required hours of instruction as shown on Line 7 to the total on Line 6.
- Line 6 must be greater than or equal to the minimum hours of instruction as required by Idaho Code 33-512(1).

Repeat these steps on each calendar for each grade grouping.

Calendars are due to the SDE by May 15th.

Please call Julie Oberle, Public School Finance, at 332-6840 or email JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov with any questions about the calendar process.

SHORTENED SESSIONS / STAFF DEVELOPMENT HOURS

Shortened Sessions

A shortened session is any day when the instructional hours are less than the instructional hours of a regular day of school. Any day that is a shortened session should be marked on the calendar with a circle and should be listed in the grid at the bottom of the calendar.

Staff Development

Staff development is time set aside for the training of teachers to allow for the development of teaching skills. Staff development does not include teacher prep time, workdays, parent-teacher conferences, mentor time, etc. Idaho Code 33-512(1)(c) allows up to 22 hours for Grades 1-12 and up to 11 hours for Kindergarten to count as instructional hours. A school may choose to offer fewer than or more than 22 hours of staff development, but may only include the lesser of their actual staff development hours or 22 hours (11 hours for Kindergarten). If no staff development hours are planned, a zero should be entered on Line 5.

Idaho Code 33-512(1)(d) states that student and staff activities related to the opening and closing of the school year, grade reporting, program planning, staff meetings, and other classroom and building management activities shall not be counted as staff development.

Staff development may take place before the first day of school, during the school year, or after the last day of school.

The hours reported for a staff development day are not limited to the length of the school day. For example, if the planned staff development is 8 hours and the school day is 5.5 hours of instruction, report the 8 hours of staff development.

A school may choose to have students in attendance for a shortened day with staff development planned before or after the planned instruction time of the students. That date on the calendar would be marked with both a circle (to indicate a shortened session) and a triangle (to indicate a staff development day). The date would be included in the grid located at the bottom of the calendar form with the appropriate hours recorded for the shortened session and for the staff development.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Questions

Who do I contact if I have a question?

Please contact Julie Oberle at (208) 332-6840 or via email at JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov with any questions.

Why is it better to have a day of no attendance (vacation day) rather than a day of poor attendance?

Average daily attendance (ADA) from the first reporting period is one of the factors used in determining salary-based apportionment and benefit apportionment. It is in the best financial interest of a school to maximize its attendance during the first reporting period to maximize its salary-based and benefit apportionments. (The first reporting period ends the first Friday in November.) A poor day of attendance will lower the average daily attendance for the week. A vacation day will simply make the week a four-day week rather than a five-day week.

The SDE encourages schools to examine their attendance history from prior years and isolate time-periods that routinely have poor attendance. For example, is attendance significantly impacted the Friday before Labor Day weekend? During the local fair? During the opening of hunting season? During harvest? Once poor attendance days have been identified, a school may want to consider adjusting its calendar to minimize the impact of poor attendance.

I thought we had to have a minimum of 180 student contact days?

No. Idaho Code 33-512(1) requires a school to provide its students a specific number of instructional hours, not a specific number of days of instruction. Nowhere does Idaho Code or the SDE require a school to provide a minimum number of instructional days.

We initially set our calendar in May of the prior school year and sent it to the SDE. Since then, we've made several changes. Do I need to send the SDE a new calendar?

Maybe. It is important the SDE be notified of all changes to the original calendar. If the changes are extensive, a new calendar will need to be submitted to the SDE. Otherwise, an email or phone call detailing the changes is sufficient. Using the new information, the original calendar(s) will be updated to reflect the changes.

Why do I have to complete a separate calendar for all of my kindergarten sessions with different schedules but having the same number of instructional hours?

Each unique kindergarten schedule must independently satisfy the 450 minimum instructional hour requirement. Unforeseen emergency closures due to adverse weather conditions or facility failures could impact one kindergarten session but not the other.

If all kindergarten sessions have the exact same schedule, complete one calendar and make photocopies. Indicate on each copy the schedule for that building as a.m., p.m., or full day kindergarten.

If our Kindergarten schedule is less than five days a week, do I need to mark the non-attendance days as vacation days?

Yes. Any week day that a student is not scheduled to be in session should be indicated as a vacation day (a box with an X). For example, if kindergarten is in session Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday, mark all Tuesdays, Thursdays, and the "off" Fridays as vacation days.

Do seniors have to meet the 990 instructional hour requirement?

No. Idaho Code 33-512(1)(f) allows the instructional time requirement for grade 12 students to be reduced for an amount of time not to exceed 11 hours of instructional time. Therefore, Grade 12 students require a minimum of 979 hours of instruction.

Do I have to complete a separate calendar for Grade 12 students if their last day is a week earlier than grades K -11?

Yes. Anytime the instructional hours differ among a grade grouping (such as Grades 9-12), a separate calendar must be completed. A grade 12 calendar is available on the SDE website. If Grade 12 students will have the exact same schedule as Grades 9-11 students, a separate calendar is not necessary.

Why do I need to send SDE a copy of the school calendar that we give patrons along with the SDE calendars?

Having a copy of the "patron" calendar is very helpful when reviewing a school's calendar. Oftentimes we can find the answer to questions that may arise during our review process by reviewing the patron version of the school calendar.

Can we have school on a holiday?

That depends on the holiday. Idaho Code 33-512(9) requires the following days be school holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Other holidays, as listed in Idaho Code 73-108, must be observed with appropriate ceremonies if it falls on a school day. These holidays include:

- The third Monday in January (Martin Luther King, Jr.-ID Human Rights Day)
- The third Monday in February (Washington's Birthday)
- The first Monday in September (Labor Day)
- The second Monday in October (Columbus Day)
- November 11 (Veterans Day).

When scheduling school on a holiday, be sure to consider the impact having school that day may have on attendance, especially if it is during the first reporting period (which ends the first Friday in November).

Shortened Sessions

What is a shortened day? If students were in attendance at least 4.0 hours, why would this be a shortened day on the calendar but not for attendance purposes?

For calendar purposes, a shortened day is any day where planned instruction is less than the regular hours/minutes of instruction as indicated on Line 1 of the calendar. Don't confuse a shortened session with the half-day reporting for attendance reporting purposes.

For **attendance reporting purposes**, a full day of attendance (1.0 ADA) is reported when students are under instruction a minimum of 4.0 hours (or 2.5 hours for kindergartners). A half day of attendance is reported when students are under instruction for at least 2.5 hours but less than 4.0 hours.

It is possible to have a shortened session for calendar purposes that is considered a full-day of attendance when reporting attendance. For example, a regular day of instruction for a school is 6.0 hours. If students were released after only 4.5 hours of instruction, this would be a shortened session on the calendar because it is less than the regular instructional time of 6.0 hours. The day would be counted as a full day of attendance when reporting ADA because students were under instruction a minimum of 4.0 hours.

What should I keep in mind when determining the length of a shortened day?

For calendar purposes, any amount of time the student is under instruction is included as instructional hours. However, for attendance reporting purposes, each grade 1-12 student under instruction 4.0 hours or more is counted as 1.0 ADA and any student under instruction at least 2.5 hours but less than 4.0 hours would be reported as a .5 ADA. While a shortened session of 2.0 hours would be included as instructional hours, no attendance would be reported for that day. Attendance reports would show that day as a vacation day.

To maximize ADA, a school should carefully examine the hours of instruction for its shortened sessions. A school having a shortened session of 3 hours and 55 minutes of instruction might consider adding five minutes to its instruction time if a good day of attendance is expected. Conversely, leave the instructional hours at less than 4.0 hours of instruction if a poor day of attendance is expected.

Any shortened day of Kindergarten having less than 2.5 hours of instruction is a vacation day for attendance reporting purposes. However, the hours of the shortened session (even though it is less than 2.5 hours) would still be included as instructional hours for calendar purposes.

Do I have to list every shortened session in the grid at the bottom of the calendar?

Yes and No. List shortened days that have the exact same instructional hours on one line.

If you have shortened days on a regular basis with the exact same instructional hours offered each shortened day, indicate this in the grid with a total for all days combined. For example, if every Monday will be a shortened day, circle all Mondays on the calendar and indicate "Every Monday" in the first column of the grid, and "35 Mondays at 3 hours" in the second column, with "105 hours" (35 Mondays x 3 hours/day) in the third column.

Similar rules apply for early release days. For example, if a calendar has the exact same instructional hours for early release days before Labor day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, spring break, and Memorial day, list those dates on one line in the first column, the instructional hours in column 2, and the combined total in column 3.

Staff Development

Is staff development limited to the length of the school day?

No. Idaho Code 33-512(1)(c) allows each school district / charter school to determine when and for how long staff development will occur.

Can we include hours for staff development offered prior to the first week of school or after the last week of school?

Yes. Idaho Code 33-512(1)(c) allows a school district / charter school to determine when and for how long staff development will occur.

For attendance reporting purposes, no ADA would be computed for a staff development day(s) unless students were in attendance for at least a portion of that week.

When are the State In-service Days?

There are no state-mandated in-service days. Historically, many schools have set aside the first Thursday and Friday of October for staff development to allow their staff to attend regional and state in-service meetings. Nowhere does Idaho Code require that these two days be set aside for staff development. It is up to your school district / charter school whether the first Thursday and Friday of October are staff development days.

How do I compute ADA for staff-development days?

When there is a full day of staff development with no instructional hours offered, the attendance for that staff development day would be reported using an average of the actual attendance for the other days in session that week. For example, if staff development was held all day on Thursday and Friday, the average daily attendance for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday would be averaged and reported for that Thursday and Friday. Do not report perfect attendance for staff development days. Always use an average of the student-contact days for that week.

If staff development is held prior to the first week of school or after the last week of school, no attendance will be reported for that staff development day. The same is true if students are not in session the entire week. For example, if students are out of school Monday and Tuesday because of staff development and are out of school Wednesday through Friday for Thanksgiving break, no ADA would be reported for that Monday and Tuesday. However, the staff development hours would be counted as part of the minimum instructional hours required (subject to the applicable limits).

If schools have a shortened session for students, with staff development sometime that day, look first to see how many instructional hours the students received:

4.0 hours of instruction or more:

ADA is computed as if a full-day of instruction was provided.

Less than 4.0 hours but more than 2.5 hours of instruction:

Student attendance is initially counted as a .5 day of attendance. Because staff development occurred that same day, attendance would be reported as if students were in attendance a full day.

Less than 2.5 hours of instruction:

No actual attendance for that day would be reported. Since staff development occurred that day, the ADA from the other days in session during that week would be averaged. The resulting average would be reported for that day of staff development.

When calculating ADA for my staff development days, can I only calculate ADA for the first 22 hours (11 hours for Kindergarten) of staff development?

No. ADA for any staff development day should be calculated unless there was no student attendance that week. The 22 hour limit (11 hours for kindergarten) only applies when calculating total hours of instruction planned for the school year. Remember, staff development does not include teacher prep time, workdays, parent-teacher conferences, mentor time, etc.

Emergency Closures

What is an emergency closure?

It is important to distinguish between qualified emergency closures which allow reduction in instructional hours from emergency closures which effect the reporting of ADA but do not allow for a reduction in the minimum instructional hours required.

For calendar purposes, Idaho Code 33-512(1)(c)(ii) allows a reduction in the minimum required hours of instruction by a total of up to 11 hours of emergency closures due to adverse weather conditions or facility failures.

For attendance reporting purposes, Idaho Code 33-1003A states that "When a school is closed, or if a school remains open but attendance is significantly reduced because of storm, flood, failure of the heating plant, loss or damage to the school building, quarantine or order of any city, county or state health agency, or for reason believed by the board of trustees to be in the best interests of the health, safety or welfare of the

pupils, the board of trustees, having certified to the SDE the cause and duration of such closure or impacted attendance, shall be considered as being the same as for the days when the school actually was in session or when attendance was not impacted.”

Instructional time lost due to closures for reasons other than adverse weather conditions or facility failure, such as widespread sickness, will not qualify as emergency closure when determining if a school has satisfied the minimum hours of instruction as required per Idaho Code 33-512(1). However, for purposes of reporting attendance, such closures do qualify as emergency closures if they have been approved by a school’s trustees as an emergency closure.

When completing the attendance reports, any emergency closure day(s) (whether due to adverse weather, facility failure, or for reason deemed necessary by the School Board of Trustees) should be indicated in the emergency closure column on the attendance report. The SDE will then compute the ADA that will be allocated to the emergency closure day(s) by averaging the ADA for the other days in session during the impacted week.

Regardless of the reason for the emergency closure, the board of trustees must certify to the SDE the cause and duration of impacted attendance or closure. A copy of the board minutes approving the emergency closure must be included with the Emergency Closure Form submitted to the SDE.

If instructional time is lost due to school closures not resulting from adverse weather or facility failures, then a school district / charter school must examine the impact of such closures on their instructional hours. If the closure(s) causes instructional hours to fall below the minimum required hours for a particular grade grouping, sufficient hours must be added to the calendar to ensure the minimum instructional hours as required in Idaho Code 33-512 are provided.

Following is a list of the more common school closures the SDE has observed. We have identified which would qualify as an emergency closure for reducing the minimum number of instructional hours required and/or would qualify as emergency closures when completing attendance reports. This list is not meant to be a comprehensive listing of events qualifying for emergency closure treatment.

	<u>Reduction in Instructional Hours Allowed</u>	<u>Emergency Closure for Attend. Rptg</u>
Adverse Weather (snow, flood, etc)	Yes	Yes
Facility Failure (no heat, fire, etc)	Yes	Yes
Quarantine (wide-spread sickness)	No	Yes
Reason as determined by the trustees to be in the best interests of the health, safety, or welfare of students	No	Yes
Funeral of a student or staff member	No	No
State athletic tournaments	No	No
Insufficient staffing due to other than adverse weather	No	No
School building not ready due to construction delays	No	No