

INSTRUCTIONAL HOUR TEMPLATE AND CALENDAR USER GUIDE

# Calendar Overview



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CREATED 03/02/2021

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## CALENDAR 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:

Grades	Required Instructional Hours
Kindergarten	450
1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	810
4 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	900
9 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	990
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	979
Alternative	900

Instructional hours include the time when students are under the guidance and direction of a teacher 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 total 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.

Calendars for the upcoming school year are due to School Finance no later than May 31. The Calendar forms are available on the SDE website <https://www.sde.idaho.gov/finance/> under the header of Calendars, School Calendar Forms. Forms are available for Kindergarten, Grades 1-3, 4-8, 9-12, 12, and Alternative schools.

If the exact same hours and minutes of instruction are offered to more than one grade grouping, only one calendar needs to be completed for that grouping. Remember to either cross out the grade grouping at the top of the calendar or edit the text to indicate the appropriate grade grouping.

*Example: if Grades 1-6 have the exact same schedule, change Grades 4-8 (found at the top of the calendar form) to Grades 1-6. It is rare 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 in the “Calculation of Instructional Hours” section found on the calendar forms. Following is an example of these lines taken from the Grades 9-12 calendar form:

### **Line 1: Hours of Instruction Per Regular Day**

- The first step determines the number of hours and minutes of instruction for a **regular** day of instruction.

**Important:** *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 should be included on Line 5 as shortened days.*

- Convert the hours and minutes to a 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.

**Notice:** *When the hours and minutes are entered in cells B50 and D50 on the template, the worksheet will automatically calculate the value rounded to three decimal places. This value will populate on Line 1 in the column on the right-hand side.*

### **Line 2: 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 an “X” (indicating a holiday/vacation day).
- This line is formula-driven, and will populate based on the information entered on the calendar above.

**Notice:** *Using the guidance from this section on determining a Regular Day of Instruction, count the total number of planned regular days per month and enter them into the yellow box beneath each month.*

- The total number of regular days planned for the school year will total and populate on Line 2 in the column on the right-hand side.

**Important:** *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 should be included on Line 5.*

### 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 rounded to three decimal places.

**Notice:** Line 3 is formula-driven and will populate based on the information in Lines 1 and 2. No additional entering of information should be required by the user.

### Line 4: Hours for Staff Development

(Up to 22 hours for Grades 1-12 and up to 11 hours for Kindergarten)

- Review the calendar and list all days having staff development in the grid at the bottom of the calendar form (ALL staff development days should be indicated with a triangle).

**Notice:** If every Wednesday is a delayed start or an early release to allow time for staff development, do not list the date for each Wednesday. Instead, write the number of Wednesdays at the allocated hours. Mark each Wednesday on the calendar with a triangle and a circle in this example since it is both a shortened day and a staff development day.

- Indicate the hours of staff development under “Hours” and the minutes of staff development under “Minutes.” The value as a decimal rounded to three places will populate under the “Decimal Equivalent” column.
  - *Example:* For six hours and 30 minutes of staff development time, enter 6 in the Hours column and 30 in the “Minutes” column.
- The total number of staff development hours will populate on Line 4 in the right-hand column based on the information entered in the table.

### Line 5: Total Hours for Shortened Days

- All shortened days should be recorded in the table 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 as 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 for shortened days in the table at the bottom of the calendar form.
- Indicate the total number of hours for the shortened day under “Hours” and the minutes under “Minutes.” The value as a decimal rounded to three places will populate under the “Decimal Equivalent” column.
- The total number of staff development hours will populate on Line 5 in the right-hand column based on the information entered in the table.

**Line 6: Total Hours of Instruction Planned**

The total number of hours of instruction planned will be the sum of the following totals:

- Line 3: The total number of regular hours of instruction
- Line 4: The total number of hours for staff development
- Line 5: The total number of hours for shortened days

**Line 7: Minimum Hours Required for Grades 9-12**

- 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 31.*

Please contact Danielle Wood ([dwood@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:dwood@sde.idaho.gov)) or Aaron McCoy ([amccoy@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:amccoy@sde.idaho.gov)) with any questions about the calendar process.

## Staff development/shortened sessions

**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 of 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 up to 22 hours (11 hours for Kindergarten) as instructional hours. 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 grids located at the bottom of the calendar form with the appropriate hours for the shortened session and for the staff development.

### **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.

### **Questions?**

Please contact Danielle Wood ([dwood@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:dwood@sde.idaho.gov)) or Aaron McCoy ([amccoy@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:amccoy@sde.idaho.gov)).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who do I contact if I have any questions?**

Please contact Danielle Wood ([dwood@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:dwood@sde.idaho.gov)) or Aaron McCoy ([amccoy@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:amccoy@sde.idaho.gov)).

### **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 day of school through the first Friday in November is one of the factors used in determining salary-based apportionment and benefit apportionment.

*It is in the best financial interest of a school district to maximize its attendance during this time to maximize its salary-based and benefit apportionments. A low 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 State Department of Education encourages schools to examine their attendance history from prior years and isolate days that routinely have low attendance. For example, is attendance significantly impacted the Friday before Labor Day weekend? During the local fair? During the opening of hunting season or harvest? Once low attendance days have been identified, a school may want to consider adjusting its calendar to minimize the impact low attendance has on state revenues.



**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. Neither Idaho Code nor 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?**

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 detailing the changes is sufficient. Using the new information, the original calendars 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 exact same number of 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 copies of the template. Indicate on each copy the schedule for that building as AM, PM, full-day, etc.

**Can we offer a four-day school week?**

Yes. One of the duties of your school board is to determine your school calendar. As of the 2020-2021 school year, 68 total school districts and charters schools had a four-day school week. Be sure to mark your non-school day with an "X" to indicate a vacation day.

**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 day that students are not scheduled to be in session should be indicated as a vacation day 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 by 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 9-11?**

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, a separate calendar is not necessary.

**Why do I need to send the 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 answer 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:

- Martin Luther King Jr/Human Rights Day (The third Monday in January)
- Washington’s Birthday (The third Monday in February)
- Labor Day (The first Monday in September)
- Columbus Day (The second Monday in October)
- Veteran’s Day (November 11)

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.

**What is a shortened day? If students were in attendance for 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 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 ISEE 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 Kindergarteners). 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 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 instruction 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 .5 ADA. While a shortened session of 2.0 hours would be included as instructional hours, no attendance would be reported for that day. ISEE attendance calendars would show that day as a vacation day, staff development day, or non-instructional time and individual student attendance would be reflected to match only their time present.

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 if 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.

For example, 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 Wednesday will be a shortened day, circle all Wednesdays on the calendar and indicate 35 Wednesdays in the first column of the grid, the total number of hours in the second column, and minutes in the third (E.G. 35 Wednesdays @ 2 hours of instruction per day/70 hours/0 minutes). The decimal equivalent will populate in the fourth column, and the total from shortened days will be reflected on Line 5.

**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 staff development will occur and its duration.

### **Can we include hours for staff development offered prior to the first day of school or after the last day 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.

### **How do I compute ADA for staff-development days?**

For a full staff development day, no attendance is reported for students; report the day as a staff development day. Report 0.0 instruction time and 1.0 staff development.

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:

On your ISEE calendar:

- 4.0 hours of instruction or more
  - ADA is computed as if a full-day of instruction was provided
  - Report 1.0 instruction time and 0.0 staff development
- Less than 4.0 hours but more than 2.5 hours of instruction
  - Student attendance is reported as .5 day of attendance
  - Report .5 instruction time and .5 staff development
- Less than 2.5 hours of instruction
  - No actual attendance for that day would be reported
  - Report 0 instruction time and 1.0 staff development

### **What are 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. Idaho Code does not 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 are staff development days.

### **What is an emergency closure?**

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

***For instructional hour 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 submitting calendar and attendance records via ISEE, please include your emergency closure days on the calendar record file to indicate the closure days. You will not submit attendance for those days absent due to emergency closure.

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 (available on the SDE website) submitted to the SDE.

If instructional time is lost due to school closures not due to adverse weather or a facility failure, 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.

The following is a list of the more common school closures reported to the SDE. 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 submitting attendance through ISEE. This list is not meant to be a comprehensive listing.

Reason	Reduction in Instructional Hours Allowed	Emergency Closure for Attendance Reporting
Adverse Weather (snow, flood, etc.)	Yes	Yes
Facility Failure (no heat, fire, etc.)	Yes	Yes
Quarantine (wide-spread sickness)	No	Yes

Reason	Reduction in Instructional Hours Allowed	Emergency Closure for Attendance Reporting
Reason as determined by the trustees to be in the best interests of the health, safety, or welfare of the students	No	Yes
Funeral of a student or staff member	No	Yes
State athletic tournaments	No	No
Insufficient staffing due to anything other than adverse weather	No	No
School building not ready due to construction delays	No	No