

**For Release Time
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Palo Pinto ISD Announces a 4-Day School Week Calendar for 2022-2023

Palo Pinto, TX— May 17, 2022 —Palo Pinto ISD is excited to announce that it will be following a 4-day school week calendar in the 2022-2023 school year. The Palo Pinto ISD School Board took action on the calendar at the May 17, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting and approved it unanimously.

District staff were provided information, weighed the pros and cons, and ultimately expressed an overwhelmingly positive opinion in a staff survey with 83% of staff voting affirmatively for a 4-day school week and the remaining 17% voting as undecided or unopinionated. Further, guardians were asked to complete a survey indicating their viewpoint on moving to a 4-day calendar and those responses were also extremely affirmative. Of the surveys sent home, 100% of the surveys were returned. Of those returned, 98% indicated their support of a 4-day calendar.

“We are at a fork in the road so-to-speak,” says Superintendent Wendell Barker. “There is news daily of school districts moving to the 4-day school calendar, several of which are in our area. We have been informally considering the option for the past year or so with all intention of looking seriously at it for the 23-24 school year. However, with so many schools making the change, we felt it was time to seek immediate feedback from our stakeholders.” Barker told parents on the survey, “Ultimately, we intend to make a decision that is most impactful for students, teachers, and the District while keeping your (the parents’) opinions at the forefront of our decision.” Barker reports that the response was

compellingly affirmative that the district's students, staff, and parents are in support of the calendar change. Barker further commented, "In a world that has been everything but status quo the past several years, including in the world of education, it is no surprise that the option of a 4-day calendar made its timely appearance. Educator attrition in Texas is currently at an all-time high. Fortunately, our staff is very pleased in working for PPISD, but, this change will only strengthen the morale of our staff and our teachers specifically. This innovative approach adheres to the state-required 75,600 minutes of instruction. School days will be 40 minutes longer Monday-Thursday in order for the instructional time not to be negatively impacted from that of the traditional calendar. We will still be going to school the same amount of time (instructional minutes) on a 4-day calendar as we would on a traditional 5-day calendar. This approach will allow additional time for teachers to analyze data, plan the most effective instruction, attend staff development trainings to hone their craft, attend meetings to ensure individual student growth, provide remediation for students in need, meet with parents as needed, all while simultaneously increasing teacher morale, quality staff recruitment, and retention, and serve any other pertinent needs. We realize that it is not going to be a perfect transition. We have thought through a lot of the details, had many discussions already, and have jogged the minds of some of our neighboring districts who have already lived the 4-day week."

"In the end," Barker comments, "our ultimate goal is to offer the best educational program for our students while staying relevant to the needs of the educational profession. Though there are rarely perfect solutions, this innovative approach seems to be one that could prove beneficial for the stakeholders in our district."

A copy of the school calendar can be found on the District's website at www.palopintoisd.net.