



August 23, 2023

Utah State Charter School Board of Trustees
250 E 500 South
PO Box 144200
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-4200

Dear USCSB Trustees,

On behalf of the faculty, staff, students, families and the Trustees of the Uintah River High School in Ft. Duchesne, I am writing to request a waiver recommendation letter from the USCSB in support of our school's application for a waiver of USBE Board Rule R277-419-4 - Minimum School Days Requirement. Per UAC R277-121, we intend to submit a request for waiver to the USBE and require a waiver recommendation from you, as our authorizer to support our application.

In a special open meeting of the Uintah River High School Board of Trustees on August 22, 2023 4:45 pm, the URHS trustees voted unanimously to approve our intent to file an application of request with USBE for waiver of R277-419-4 Minimum School Days requirement. The draft minutes of this meeting are linked here:

[Meeting Minutes](#)

History and Reasoning

Several years ago, the Ute Indian Tribal Government made the strategic decision to adopt a four-day work week, aimed at optimizing human resources while efficiently managing budgetary allocations. As a result, Uintah River High School, which operates under partial funding and governance by the Ute Indian Tribe, seeks to maintain alignment with the Tribe's work schedule.

This intention is driven by several compelling factors. First and foremost, our status as a charter school renders us ineligible for student transportation funding, making us reliant on the tribal transportation system to facilitate the safe commute of students residing in outlying areas such as Whiterocks, Randlett, and Lapoint. Given that the tribal transportation system is not operational on Fridays due to the Tribe's nonworking day, sustaining a four-day school week would ensure consistent transportation accessibility for our students.

Furthermore, the profound influence of the Tribe on our school community is evident, with a significant portion of our students' parents being employed by the Tribe.

*Uintah River High School
PO Box 235
Ft. Duchesne, UT 84026
Tel: (435) 725-4088
Fax: (435) 722-1228*



Acknowledging this interconnectedness, the school board recognizes the value of fostering family time and preserving traditional values. By adhering to the four-day work week, we actively promote quality family interactions and offer opportunities to impart essential skills like native language proficiency, arts, history, and cultural heritage.

Additionally, the incorporation of no-school days into our academic calendar serves a dual purpose. On one hand, it permits us to meticulously plan enriching educational activities and incentive trips, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience. On the other hand, it facilitates the implementation of the "Friday School" initiative, a time when designated staff members commit to providing academic support, enabling students to catch up on assignments and engage in credit recovery. Under this initiative, designated faculty members are stipend for their time every Friday, from 10 AM to 3 PM, to engage with students in various capacities, such as offering support for make-up assignments and credit recovery. The implementation of the "Friday Learning Initiative" has yielded remarkable outcomes. A surge in students successfully completing their coursework and participating in credit recovery programs stands as a testament to the effectiveness of this approach. This program not only strengthens academic achievement but also fosters a sense of community and support within the school environment.

In essence, by embracing the four-day school week, Uintah River High School aims to ensure uninterrupted student transportation, promote cherished family values, and uphold the teachings of our vibrant tribal heritage. This commitment not only echoes the Tribe's work schedule but also reflects our dedication to the holistic development and success of our students.

URHS Enrollment Data

Total Students: 80

9th Grade: 20

10th Grade: 20

11th Grade: 20

12th Grade: 20

Classroom size average is between 10-12 students.

URHS Demographics

98% American Indian

2% White

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URHS Staff Data

Education Director – 1
 School Director – 1
 Counselor – 1
 Secretary – 1
 Special Education Director – 1
 Teachers – 10
 Aides - 3

URHS Graduation Rates

Since 2020 when new director started

Graduation Cohort	URHS Graduation Rate	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	88%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	87%	88%	78%
2021	71%	88%	78%
2020	80%	88%	73%

Sources:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/05798495-2914-42b4-ab3a-a8fad085edf0>

Utah.gov

URHS Aspire Plus

9th Grade Language Arts

School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 19%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	Proficient – 24% Approaching – 6% Below – 70%	Proficient – 34.45% Approaching – 46% Below – 14.67%	Proficient – 10.99% Approaching – 57.14% Below – 31.43%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

9th Grade Math

School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 0%	Not Available	Not Available

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2022	Proficient – 7% Approaching – 13% Below – 80%	Proficient – 31.42% Approaching – 41.38% Below – 19.87%	Proficient – 11.03% Approaching – 41.78% Below – 47.18%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

9th Grade Science

School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 6%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	Proficient – 13% Approaching – 19% Below – 68%	Proficient – 28.5% Approaching – 30.40% Below – 30.34%	Proficient – 14.47% Approaching – 32.83% Below – 52.05%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

10th Grade Language Arts

School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 19%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	Proficient – 0% Approaching – 47% Below – 53%	Proficient – 42.04% Approaching – 43.34% Below – 10.28%	Proficient – 16.67% Approaching – 63.66% Below – 18.30%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

10th Grade Math

School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 0%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	Proficient – 0% Approaching – 38% Below – 62%	Proficient – 31.42% Approaching – 41.38% Below – 19.87%	Proficient – 11.03% Approaching – 41.78% Below – 47.18%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

10th Grade Science

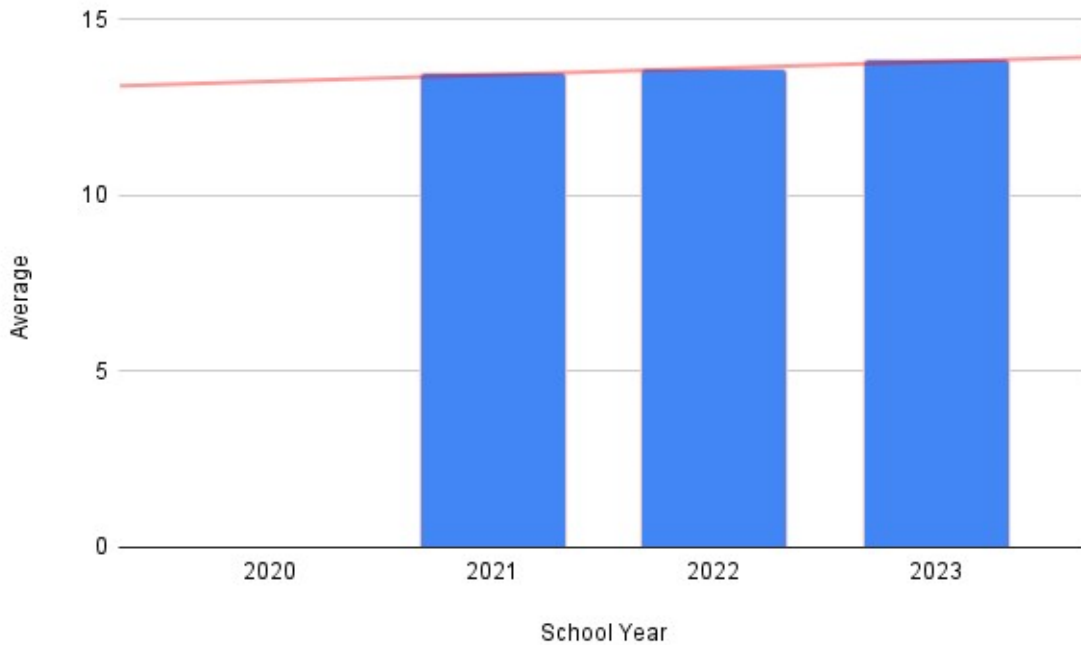
School Year	URHS Aspire Plus	State Average	State American Indian Average
2023	Proficient – 6%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	Proficient – 12%	Proficient – 25.18%	Proficient – 10.59%

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	Approaching – 29% Below – 59%	Approaching – 31.16% Below – 38.85%	Approaching – 29.20% Below – 59.43%
2021	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A
2020	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A	COVID – N/A

URHS ACT Scores



URHS I-Ready Year End Data

Year	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Reading % in tiers	COVID Year		
Tier I		2%	2%
Tier II		6%	13%
Tier III		92%	77%
Math % in tiers			
Tier I		2%	8%

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Tier II		13%	6%
Tier III		85%	75%

URHS Attendance Rates

School Year	URHS Attendance Rate	State Average	State Average for American Indian
2023	74%	Not Available	Not Available
2022	71%	92%	88%
2021	78%	93%	92%
2022	85%	96%	94%

School Calendar

School Bell Schedule

**Uintah River High School
Academic Calendar 2023-2024**

<p>AUGUST 2023</p> <p>1st Occurrence of Release 2nd Occurrence of Release 3rd End of 1st Quarter (13 academic days in August)</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 2023</p> <p>1st Labor Day 2nd 2nd School Day (optional) 3rd 3rd School Day 4th 4th School Day (15 days in September)</p>	<p>OCTOBER 2023</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (14 days in October) [1 Q = 39 Days]</p>	<p>NOVEMBER 2023</p> <p>1st 1st Indigenous Week 2nd 2nd Indigenous Week 3rd 3rd Indigenous Week (14 days in November)</p>	<p>DECEMBER 2023</p> <p>1st 1st Christmas Party 2nd 2nd Christmas Party 3rd 3rd Christmas Party (12 days in December)</p>	<p>JANUARY 2024</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (2 Q = 37 Days)</p>	<p>FEBRUARY 2024</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (14 days in February)</p>	<p>MARCH 2024</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (15 days in March) [3 Q = 38 Days]</p>	<p>APRIL 2024</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (14 days in April)</p>	<p>MAY 2024</p> <p>1st 1st Q 2nd 2nd Q 3rd 3rd Q 4th 4th Q (13 days in May) [4 Q = 37 Days]</p>
<p>Key</p> <p>130 Student Academic Days 140 Teacher/Staff Work Days Indigenous Week (11/6-11/9)</p> <p>Early exit Parent/Teacher/Conference/Graduation Non-School Days, Holidays and Weekends Releasing/End of Quarter</p>									

Uintah River High School 2023-2024

Bell Schedule

Class Hour	Time	Duration
First Bell	8:13	2 Minutes
1 st	8:15-9:05	50 Minutes
2 nd	9:07-9:57	50 Minutes
Snack Break	9:57-10:03	6 Minutes
3 rd	10:05-10:55	50 Minutes
4 th	10:57-11:47	50 Minutes
Lunch	11:47-12:10	23 Minutes
5 th	12:12-1:02	50 Minutes
6 th	1:04-1:54	50 Minutes
Break	1:54-2:00	6 Minutes
7 th	2:02-2:52	50 Minutes
8 th	2:54-3:44	50 Minutes
9 th	3:44-4:15	31 minutes

Total Number of Academic Days: 150
Total Seat Hours: 7.18/day X 150 = 1,077 hours (87 hours over 990)

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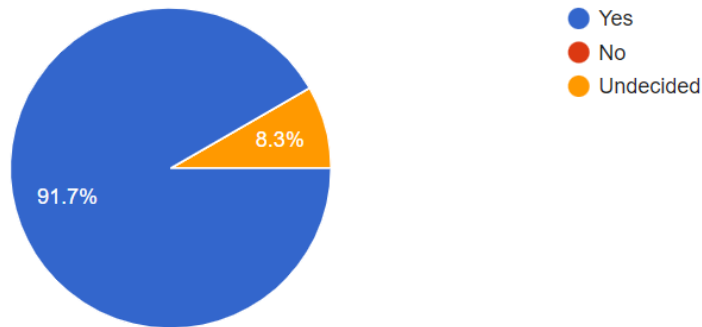


URHS Survey Results

Teacher Survey Results

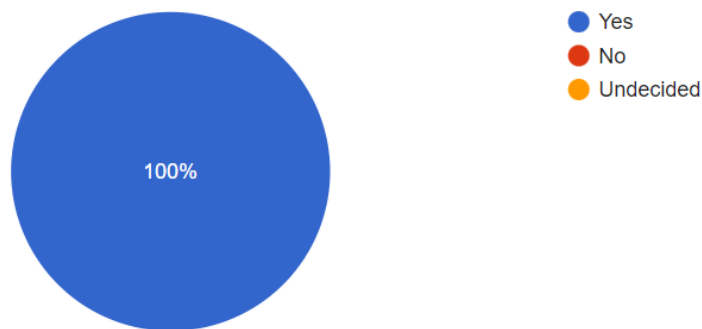
Are you for the continuation of a four day school week?

12 responses



In terms of your workload and professional growth, have you found that the extended weekends provided by the four-day school week are beneficial?

12 responses



How has the four-day school week influenced your teaching methods and students' engagement in your classes?

- “I think it gives our students extra opportunities for cultural growth and the ability to not be overwhelmed with their workload in school. This makes it

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easier for me to take time on concepts and to make sure they fully understand what is being taught to them as students have the opportunity to come in on Friday for any extra help if they need it.”

What strategies have you employed to ensure that students receive adequate support and attention within the condensed school week?

- “It seems our students receive a similar amount of seat time as compared to 5-day/week students so I feel that that they receive adequate support and attention during the week and most likely more so since we have significantly smaller class sizes.”

Have you observed any changes in student attendance and punctuality as a result of the continued four-day school week?

- “Yes when the tribe is closed, our students do not attend. So continuing the schedule with the tribe is crucial to our student attendance.”
- “Since most parents who work for the tribe have a four-day work week I believe that more students show up as compared to having to come on Fridays as well.”

What insights can you provide regarding the coordination of parents' and guardians' schedules with the ongoing four-day school week?

- “Parents are more eager to attend during the set times we have arranged as it meets their schedules more appropriately.”
- “Overall it seems that our staff and students greatly prefer the four-day school week. Both staff and students seem to appreciate the longer week-end and come back to school on Monday ready to work.”
- “Many parents and guardians have a four-day work week, so the school's schedule matches well.”

From your perspective, how has the continuation of the four-day school week contributed to the school's overall atmosphere and community spirit?

- “Students are able to be home and/or travel with their parents on the weekends, since the parents have a four-day work week.”
- “The 4-day work week has allowed us to be more in line with the tribe and the families we service.”

Based on your experience, how has the four-day school week influenced the school's academic achievements and student growth?

- “If students need the help we offer Friday Schools for make-up.”
- “Fridays are available for continued Professional Development and prep time which supports academic achievements and student growth.”

Additional Comments

- “I think making a big change to the students’ schedule at this point would discourage a lot of students from coming to school and might be a lot of change that will disrupt student morale.”

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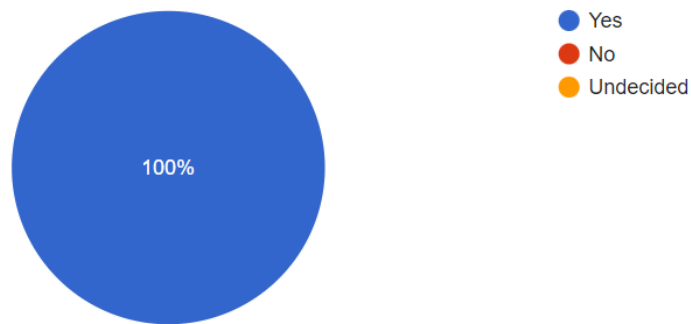


- “Post Covid, I have seen other district models of Fridays (ie online option and half day) and I don't believe they are effective. I believe we are better off staying with a four-day school week.”

Parent Survey Results

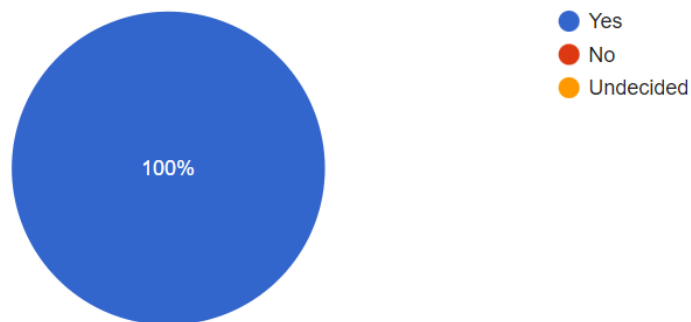
Are you for the continuation of a four day school week?

7 responses



In terms of spending time with family and activities, have you found that the extended weekends provided by the four-day school week are beneficial for your student?

7 responses



How do you perceive the advantages or disadvantages of your child's school maintaining a four-day school week (Monday-Thursday) compared to a traditional five-day schedule?

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- It works with my work schedule
- We have better planning with our families.
- Advantages: Use of 5th day for makeup and extra student help. Disadvantages: longer school day for students.
- The advantage is it allows for more time with our child as it matches our schedule.
- It's good. Keep from being in a negative environment from other students.
- It gives them a nice break to help against burn out
- Betterment of my child's mental health

Do you believe that the extended weekends provided by the four-day school week have positively or negatively affected your child's academic experience and well-being?

- Positively have helped
- My child knows in order to have an extended weekend he must have all his work done and turned in helps him be more responsible with his schooling
- I believe it will positively affect my child's academic performance, knowing there is an extra day to take care of things that may have not been completed in the four prior days. I anticipate that it will be good for my child's wellbeing as it corresponds with my work schedule.
- Positive: my student does not get overwhelmed or lose interest/focus with the current schedule.
- It's in a good way. Positive
- It has a positive affect
- Positive affect

Based on your observations, how do you believe the four-day school week has affected your child's academic progress and overall learning journey?

- Yes
- He keeps his grades up because he wants that extra day.
- My student is motivated to get school work done in order to enjoy the end of the week off, as well as dedicating time to school athletics. The time/schedule of classes for a 4-day school week has been beneficial.
- She isn't getting burned out. Which is good for her or stress
- It gives them the break they need so they don't get bored at school and minds wonder off or get overwhelmed and get burned out and just blow off school or shut down
- Positive

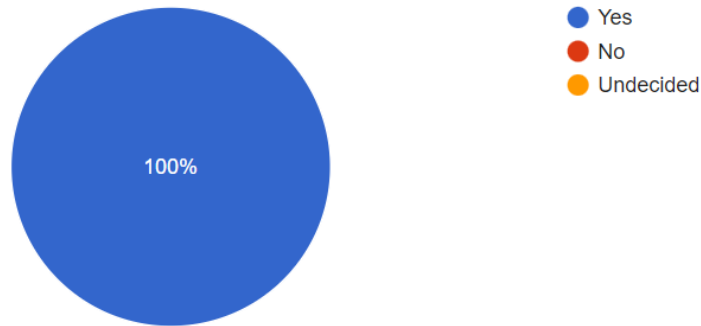
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Student Survey Results

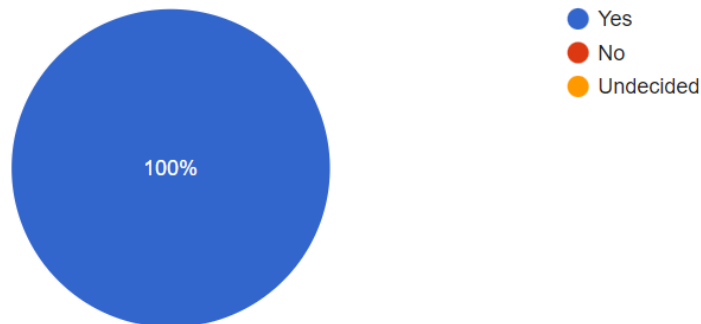
Are you for the continuation of a four day school week?

2 responses



In terms of spending time with family and activities, have you found that the extended weekends provided by the four-day school week are beneficial for you?

2 responses



How do you perceive the benefits of having school for four days a week (Monday-Thursday) compared to a traditional five-day schedule?

- Less overwhelming

How has the four-day school week influenced your engagement and participation in classes?

- Yes, it doesn't make me feel down and drowsy

What do you think about the overall atmosphere and sense of community in the school due to the ongoing four-day school week?

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- Normal
- Good

We sincerely appreciate the USCSB's consideration of our request for support and welcome any questions or request for clarification needed to make a determination in this case.

Kind Regards,

Brittany Luck

URHS Director
435.725.4089
BrittanyL@uintahriverwarriors.org

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