

## Executive Summary

### Legislative Mandate

This examination is in response to the requirement of RCW 28A.305.141 that the State Board of Education (SBE) examine the basic education waivers for purposes of economy and efficiency that have been granted under this section and make a recommendation to the Legislature.

(4) The state board of education shall examine the waivers granted under this section and make a recommendation to the education committees of the legislature by December 15, 2013, regarding whether the waiver program should be continued, modified, or allowed to terminate. This recommendation should focus on whether the program resulted in improved student learning as demonstrated by empirical evidence. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to: Improved scores on the Washington assessment of student learning, results of the dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills, student grades, and attendance.

### Board Recommendation

On November 15, 2013, the State Board approved the following recommendation to the Legislature:

**Recognizing that the data is inconclusive as to the question asked by the Legislature, Did the alternative program lead to measurable growth in student achievement?, but that the data does show no measurable decline in student achievement and that other benefits were identified by the waiver district communities, the State Board recommends that Option 2 Waivers be allowed to continue for an interim period.**

### Background

RCW 28A.305.141 was enacted by SHB 1292 in 2009, authorizing a basic education waiver from the 180 days requirement for the purposes of economy and efficiency for a limited number of districts with fewer than 500 students. Requests from Bickleton and Paterson School Districts were approved in November 2009, and renewals approved in March 2012. Both continue to operate on modified calendars with four-day school weeks. Lyle School District was approved in 2009 for a waiver of 12 days the first year and 24 the next two. It operated on a modified calendar for two years before returning to a standard calendar.

In making its recommendation, the State Board of Education gave principal focus to the impacts of the waivers on student learning, but also considered district costs and savings, current research on compressed school calendars, and other impacts on the community.

### Academic Impacts

RCW 28A.305.141 requires that the recommendation of the SBE “focus on whether the program resulted in improved student learning.” There are a number of factors that make attributing

changes in student achievement to the flexible calendar difficult. The small sizes of the districts, the short program time span, and the incompleteness of much of the necessary data hinder the board's ability to assess impacts on student achievement. Attributing any specific change to the school calendar is also not possible because of the myriad other factors that may have affected student achievement over the course of the waivers. The board found no discernible consistent improvement in available state measures of student achievement in the districts operating on flexible calendars. This echoes the findings of national research on the four-day week that the flexible calendar appears, at best, not to negatively affect student achievement.

The following datasets were considered:

- Median Student Growth Percentiles
- State Assessments (WASL, MSP, HSPE)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)
- State and district attendance data

Student grades were received from one of the waiver districts, but were determined insufficient to use for analysis.

### **Financial Impacts**

Because the stated purpose of the waiver is “economy and efficiency,” the board examined financial data from Paterson and Bickleton. Factors that impact savings, such as contract agreements with staff, changes in fuel prices, and programmatic changes obscure the effects of the flexible week on district costs. Changes in state funding formulas for basic education and transportation also make it difficult to assess savings. District savings were not identifiable through standard data reported by the districts to the state. In their waiver applications the districts estimated large savings in classified staff costs. The methods used for calculating such costs and attributing those savings to the four-day week, however, were unclear.

The following datasets were considered:

- Transportation revenue and expenditures
- State revenue and expenditure reports
- District-reported costs and savings

### **Other District Impacts**

Paterson has instituted “Adventure Fridays” on select Fridays throughout the school year for enrichment programs, such as field trips, fine arts, and special projects. Bickleton has used the Fridays for professional development programs and is working on a school-to-work program with companies in the area. Paterson has also repurposed savings on classified staff for an additional 0.73 FTE certificated staff to support a new block schedule. Both districts reported decreased absences, which coincides with findings in the national research. Lyle, which discontinued the modified calendar, found that Fridays designated for additional support to students were underutilized and created childcare concerns. Bickleton and Paterson both reported that childcare was not an issue for their communities.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Student Achievement Data Tables

Attachment B: Letter from Former Lyle Superintendent Huffman

Attachment C: Letter from Lyle Superintendent Hill

Attachment D: Additional Materials from Paterson School District

Attachment E: Additional Materials from Bickleton School District

Attachment F: Publications Cited

The districts' waiver renewal applications (March 2012) can be accessed at:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2012.03.14-15%2006%20Option%20Two%20Waiver%20Requests.pdf>

## **Acknowledgments**

The State Board of Education wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the Offices of Assessment and Student Information, Pupil Transportation, and Apportionment and Financial Services at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Bickleton, Lyle, and Paterson School Districts in the examination required by RCW 28A.305.141(4).

## EXAMINATION OF ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY WAIVERS

### Legislative Mandate

This examination is in response to the requirement of RCW 28A.305.141 that the State Board of Education (SBE) examine and make a recommendation on basic education waivers granted for the purposes of economy and efficiency.

(4) The state board of education shall examine the waivers granted under this section and make a recommendation to the education committees of the legislature by December 15, 2013, regarding whether the waiver program should be continued, modified, or allowed to terminate. This recommendation should focus on whether the program resulted in improved student learning as demonstrated by empirical evidence. Such evidence includes, but is not limited to: Improved scores on the Washington assessment of student learning, results of the dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills, student grades, and attendance.

### Board Recommendation

On November 15, 2013, the board voted to approve a recommendation to the Legislature to meet the requirement in RCW 28A.305.141. The recommendation approved by the Board is:

**Recognizing that the data is inconclusive as to the question asked by the Legislature, “Did the alternative program lead to measurable growth in student achievement?,” but that the data does show no measurable decline in student achievement and that other benefits were identified by the waiver district communities, the State Board recommends that Option 2 Waivers be allowed to continue for an interim period.**

### Background

RCW 28A.305.141 was enacted by SHB 1292 in 2009, authorizing a basic education waiver from the 180 days requirement for the purposes of economy and efficiency. (The board has termed them “Option Two” waivers to distinguish them from the waivers granted under RCW 28A.305.140.) These waivers enable adoption of a flexible calendar, typically resulting in a four-day school week. The number of waivers that could be granted was limited to two for districts with enrollment less than 150, and three for districts with enrollments between 150 and 500.

Four districts have applied for waivers under this statute — Paterson, Bickleton, and Mill A for the waivers for districts with fewer than 150 students, and Lyle for districts of 150 to 500. Requests from Paterson and Bickleton were approved in November 2009, and renewals granted in March 2012. Both continue to operate on modified calendars. Bickleton has a waiver of 30 days from the 180-day requirement, and Paterson of 34 days, both through the 2014-15 school year. Lyle received a waiver in November 2009 of 12 days for 2009-10 and 24 days for the next two school years. It operated a four-day school week for two years before deciding to return to a standard calendar. Mill A was not approved for a waiver as it would have exceeded the cap on waivers for districts with fewer than 150 students.

The State Board of Education adopted rules as WAC 180-18-065 in 2012 establishing criteria for evaluation of waiver applications under this section.

## **Policy Considerations**

RCW 28A.305.141 directs the State Board of Education to examine the economy and efficiency basic education waiver program, with a focus on the impact on student learning, and make a recommendation to continue, modify, or allow the program to expire as scheduled under law. Policy considerations include, but are not limited to:

1. Was there an identifiable impact on student achievement?
2. Were there cost savings to the districts having the waivers?
3. Does a review of the literature on shortened school weeks support continuation of the waivers?

## **Summary of Findings**

The following datasets were considered in response to the directive from the Legislature:

- Median Student Growth Percentiles
- State Assessments (WASL, MSP, HSPE)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Transportation Revenue and Expenditures
- District Reported Savings
- State Revenue and Expenditure Reports
- Student Absences

The examination of the program also included a review of the districts' waiver applications, supplemental materials provided by the districts, and a literature review of high-quality research on the impacts of a four-day school week.

The review of the datasets available from the state did not produce any findings of identifiable impacts on student achievement or on district savings. Student achievement data provided by the districts in the renewal applications submitted in March 2012 were not complete enough to discern a change, either positive or negative. The district methodology used to arrive at estimated savings was also unclear. Evidence received in district applications showed positive impacts attributed to the flexible week, primarily in student and staff attendance and staff and community satisfaction. Most findings from the literature review indicate no discernible impact on student learning and that savings are often less than anticipated.

## **Academic Impacts**

While a number of districts across the nation have implemented four-day weeks, high-quality studies have found that student achievement was not affected, either positively or negatively. Any impacts that were observed in case studies were not attributable to the school schedule alone. "There is decided lack of evidence that the four-day week helps or hurts student achievement – anecdotal evidence seems to point merely to a 'lack of harm' where student achievement is concerned." (Gaines, 2008.) At best, the flexible week was found to not adversely affect student learning. (Donis-Keller & Silver, 2009; Plucker, Cierniak, & Chamberlin, 2012.) One recent study found a positive relationship between adoption of a four-day school week and performance in reading and math in Colorado. (Anderson & Walker, 2012.)

RCW 28A.305.141 requires that the recommendation of the SBE "focus on whether the program resulted in improved student learning." Several factors make attributing changes in student

achievement to the flexible calendar difficult. The small sizes of the districts, the short time the program has been in place, and incompleteness of much of the necessary data hinder the ability to assess impacts on student learning. Changes in the rigor of state math assessments in recent years also make comparisons of pre- and post-waiver achievement challenging.

Where a change in student achievement is identified, it would also not be possible to disentangle the effect of the school schedule from the myriad other factors that may have affected student achievement over the course of the waivers. The data collected from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the districts may provide information on district trends, but aside from district assertions, a causal relationship cannot be identified in the evidence.

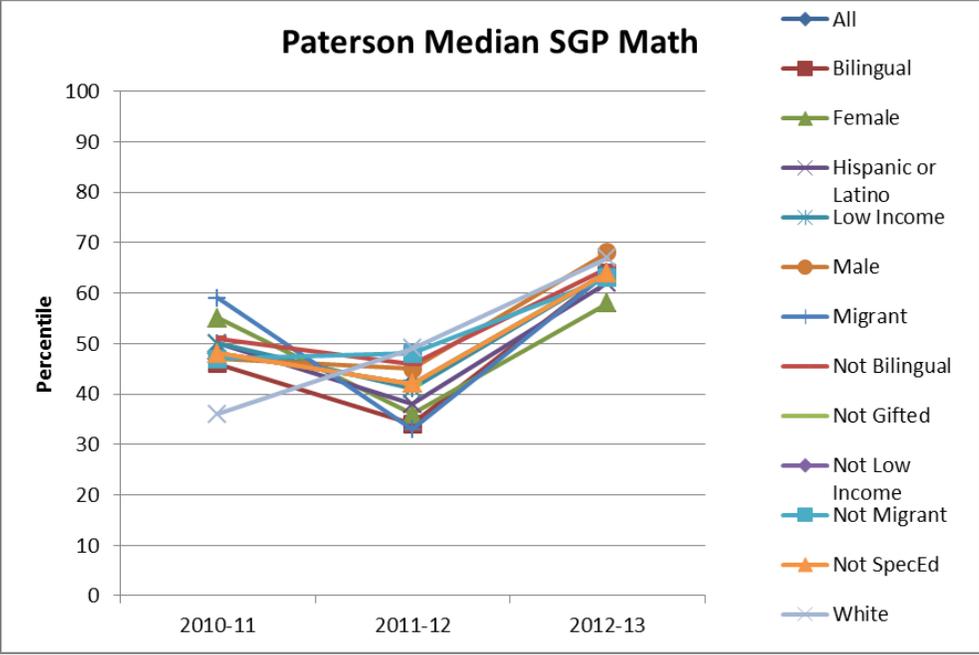
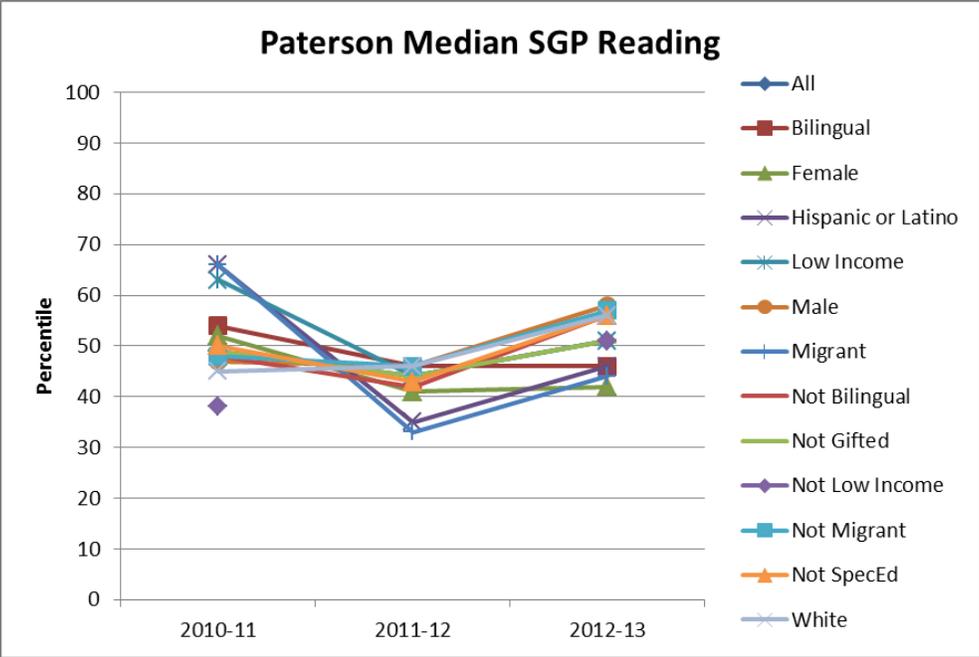
The statute lists evidence to be considered in the board's examination of the pilot waiver program, including but not limited to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning, dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills (DIBELS), and student grades. Board staff also collected median student growth percentile data from OSPI. Paterson provided MAP testing results. Bickleton provided DIBELS test results. The SBE requested student grades from both districts, as grades are not collected at the state level. Paterson provided grades for three years by cohort. They are insufficient, however, to use to draw conclusions regarding the waiver's impact on achievement.

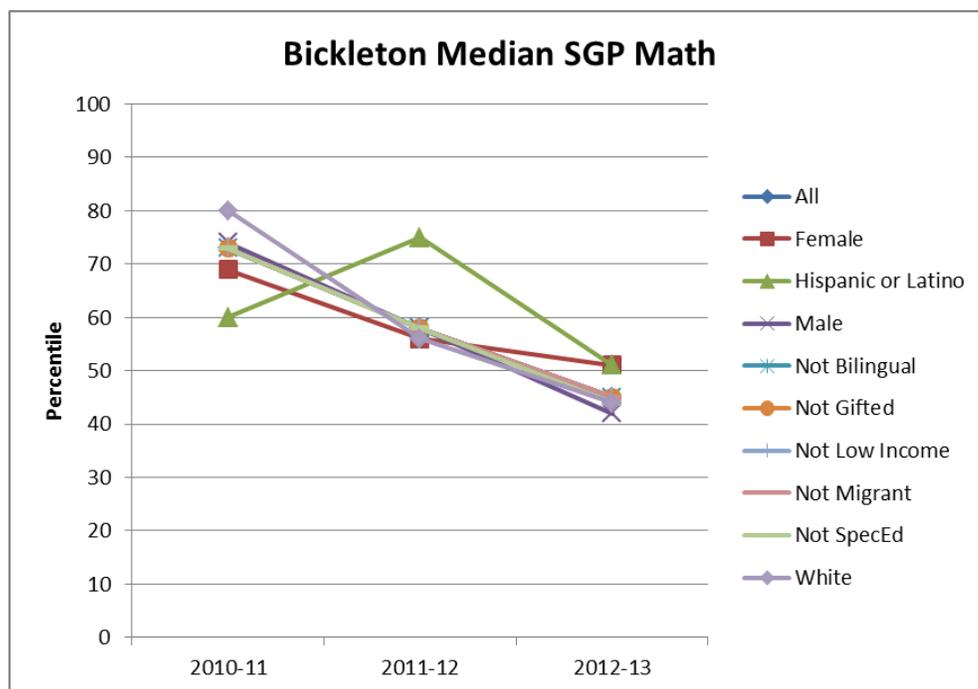
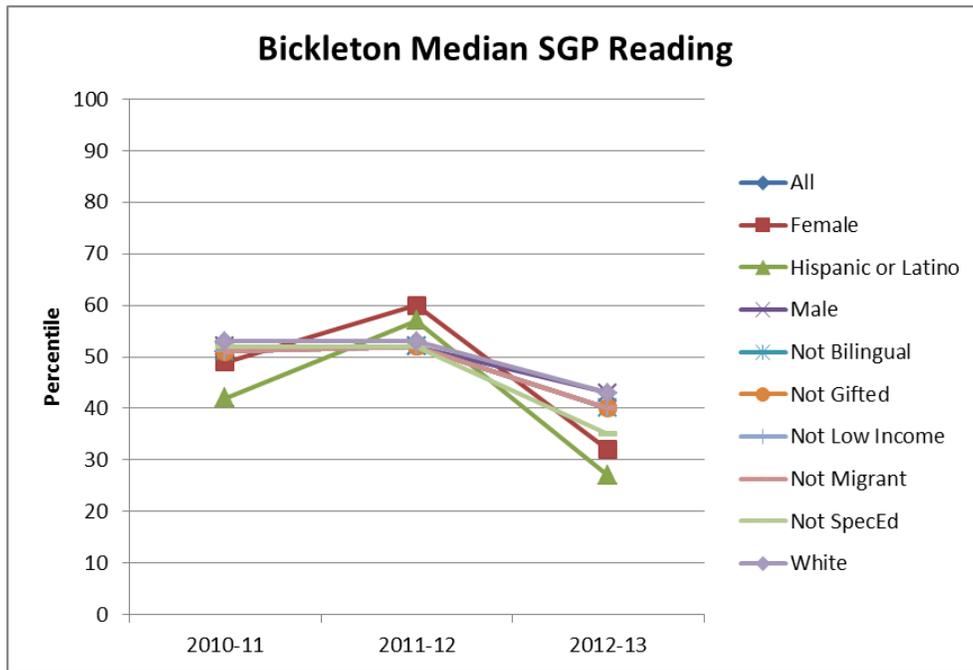
Studies have found increased student and teacher attendance with the four-day week. (Gaines, 2008; Ryan, 2009; Plucker, et. al., 2012.) This finding was echoed by Paterson and Bickleton. The districts attributed increased attendance by teachers and students to having a business day off to take care of appointments, which normally require a full day absence because of long distances from some services. Lyle reported that attendance was a concern with the four-day week because of the increased instructional time lost to students if a day was missed.

Data reported to the state on student attendance is limited to unexcused absences before 2011-2012, so the board turned to the districts for additional information. In response to a request, the districts provided some data on excused absences and student attendance. Paterson tracked excused absences and provided data for 2009 through 2012. It reported that excused absences for sickness, appointments, and family reasons declined over this time, though the trend is not consistent. Bickleton provided attendance reports from CEDARS. The CEDARS data, however, do not include excused absences. Staff determined that calculating excused absences based on the number of days enrolled and number of unexcused absences would not produce a reliable estimate of excused absences, and would also not provide reasons for excused absences.

OSPI provided median student growth percentiles (SGP) for Paterson and Bickleton from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013. (Both districts received their waivers during the 2009-2010 school year.) Student growth percentiles for years prior to 2010-2011 are not yet available, so a comparison of growth in pre-waiver years with growth in waiver years is not possible at this time.

The charts below show the median SGP in reading and math for each district. Not all student groups are represented on each chart due to sample size considerations. In Paterson, all groups, except for white students, experienced a decline in growth in reading and math in 2011-2012, followed by an increase in 2012-2013. In math, the 2012-2013 median SGP was higher than in 2010-2011 for all groups, but in reading not all groups returned to pre-decline levels of growth. In Bickleton, all groups except Hispanic or Latino (and Female for reading) experienced a decline in median SGP in both reading and math.





OSPI also provided MSP and HSPE scores rolled up to the district level, rather than grade level. Data are not made publicly available for student groups under ten due to privacy concerns, and in many years Paterson and Bickleton had grade levels with fewer than ten students. While this aggregation may obscure variations across grades and student groups, it is the only method available for examining state assessment data for these districts as directed in the legislation. The SBE selected two districts of similar size and demographics that operate on traditional five-day weeks for comparison with Paterson and Bickleton’s MSP and HSPE scores. The table below shows the characteristics of the comparison districts.

<b>Paterson Comparisons</b>					
	Total Enrollment	Hispanic	White	FRPL	ELL
Paterson School District	111	50.50%	49.50%	97.30%	32.70%
Prescott Elementary School	95	80.00%	20.00%	90.90%	34.10%
Manson Middle School	142	69.70%	28.90%	83.80%	25.40%

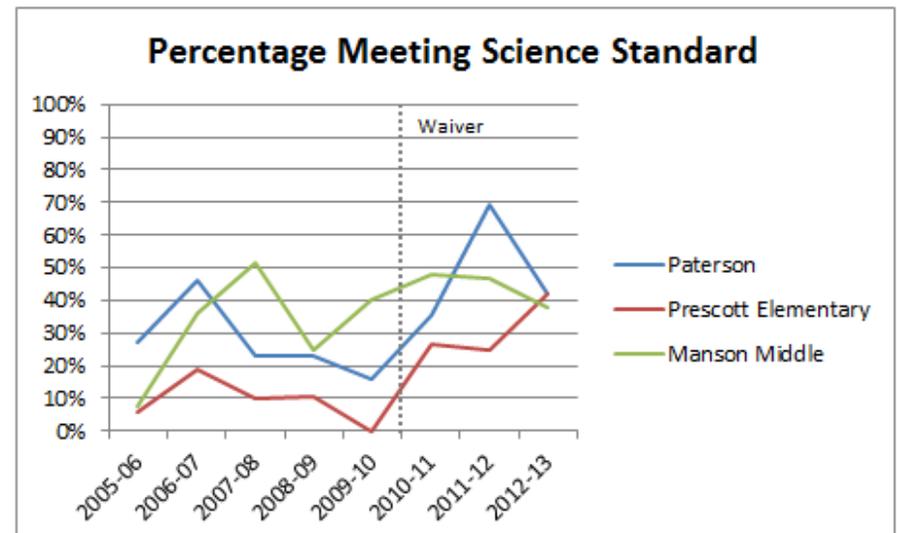
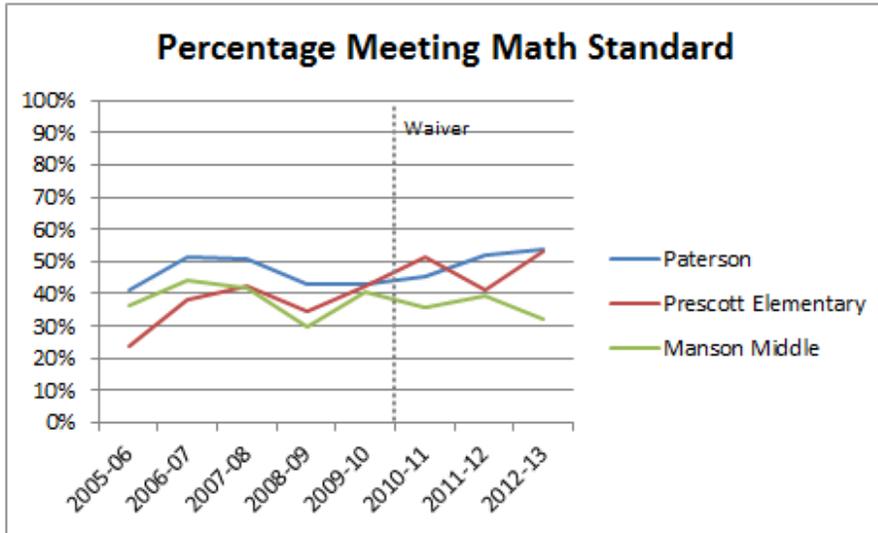
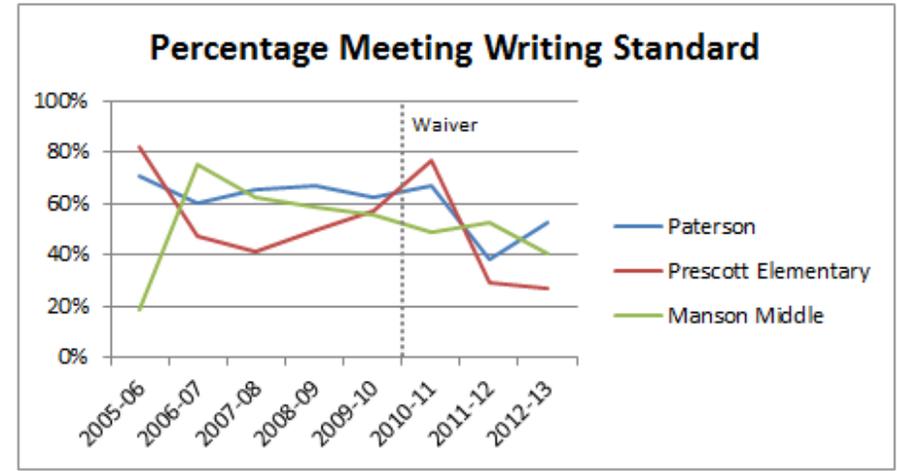
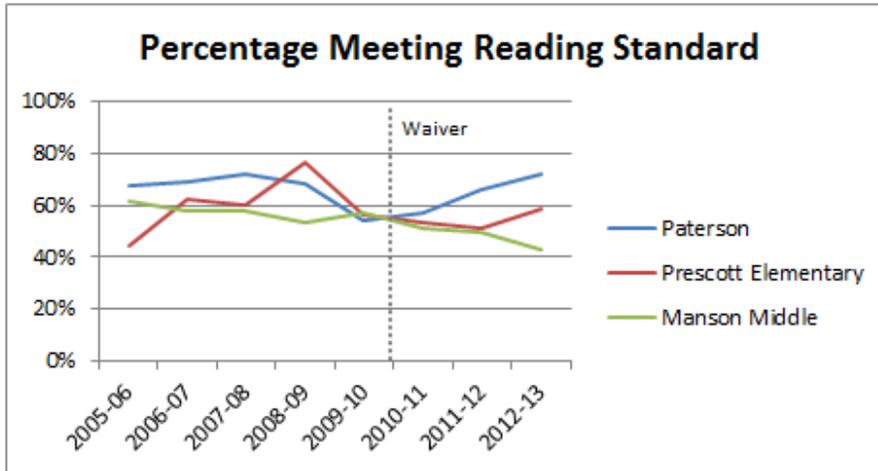
<b>Bickleton Comparisons</b>					
	Total Enrollment	Hispanic	White	FRPL	ELL
Bickleton School District	101	27.70%	69.30%	0.0%	0.0%
Trout Lake School	117	14.50%	77.80%	0.0%	0.0%
Orchard Prairie Elementary	84	4.80%	94.00%	0.0%	0.0%

The charts below show the aggregate percentage of students meeting standard in reading, writing, math, and science for Bickleton, Paterson, and the comparison districts. The data that support the charts are shown in Attachment A.

Scores vary widely, with no discernible patterns for either Paterson and Bickleton or the comparison districts. With the exception of reading in Paterson, the districts with waivers did not consistently meet standard at higher rates than the districts operating on a traditional schedule. It is also notable that, with the exception of science in Paterson, no post-waiver peaks in performance exceed peaks during the pre-waiver period for Paterson or Bickleton.

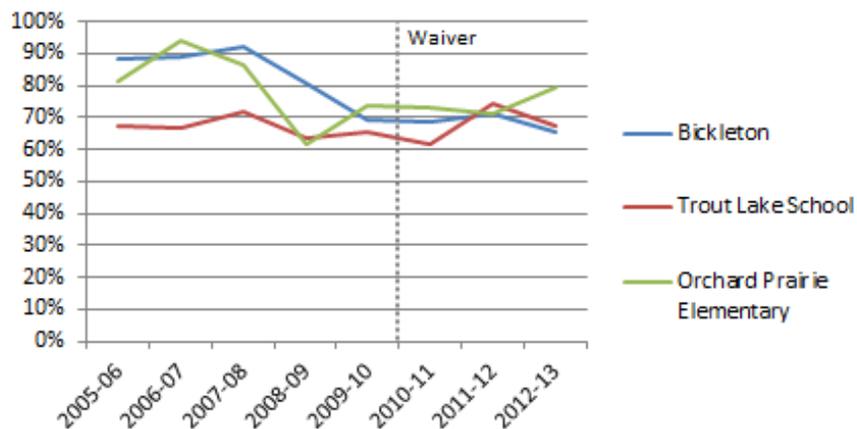
While attributing changes in student performance to the waivers is very difficult for reasons mentioned above, it is worth noting that there is no discernible, consistent improvement in available state measures of student achievement in the districts operating a flexible calendar.

## Paterson State Assessment Comparisons

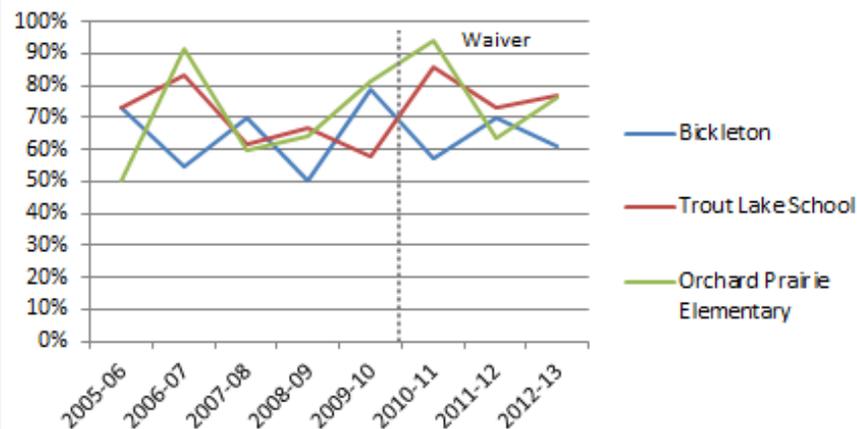


### Bickleton State Assessment Comparisons

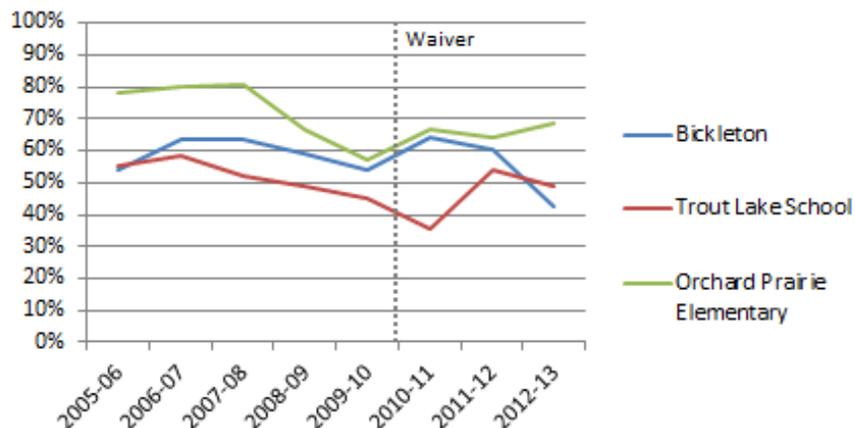
#### Percentage Meeting Reading Standard



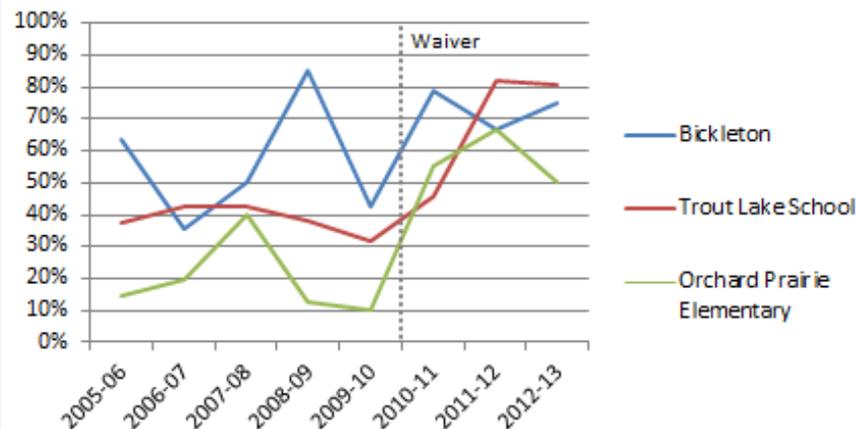
#### Percentage Meeting Writing Standard



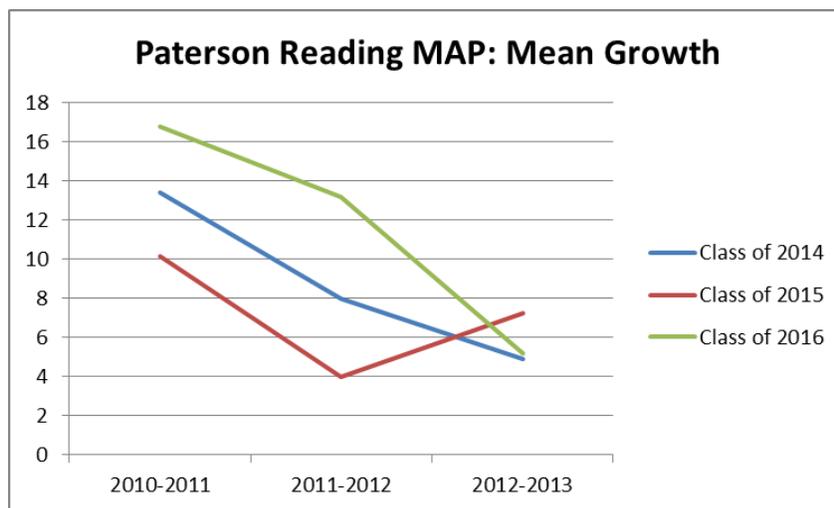
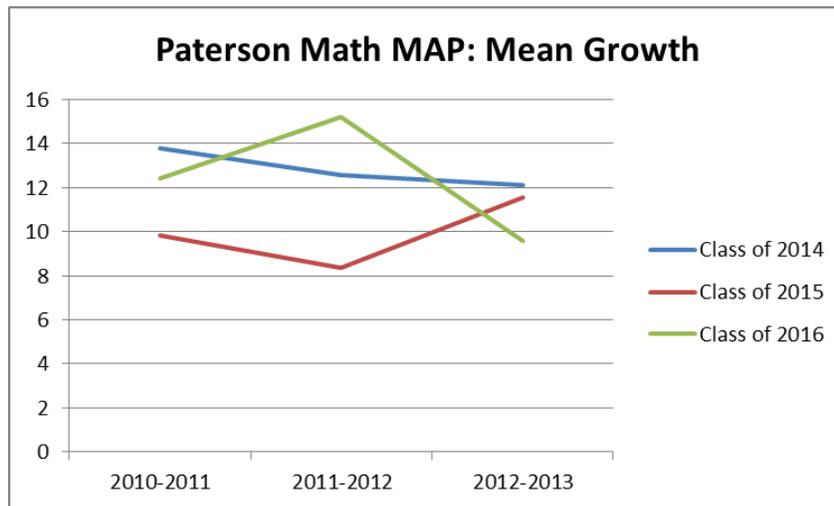
#### Percentage Meeting Math Standard



#### Percentage Meeting Science Standard



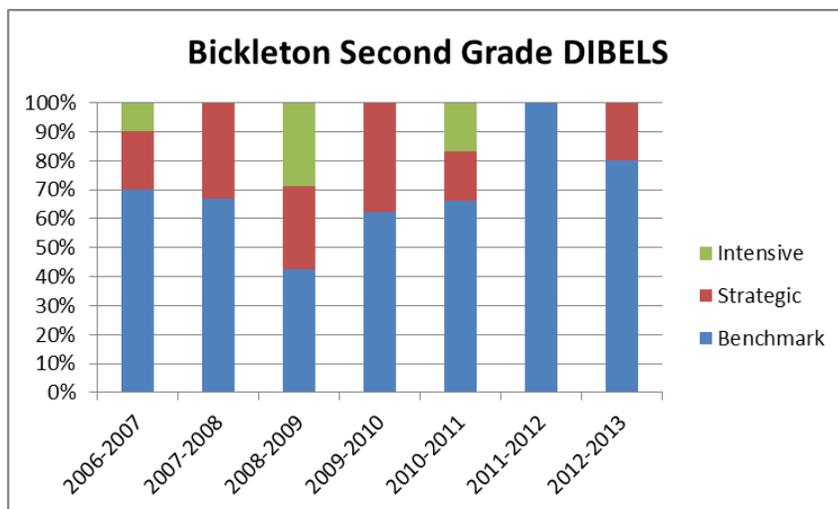
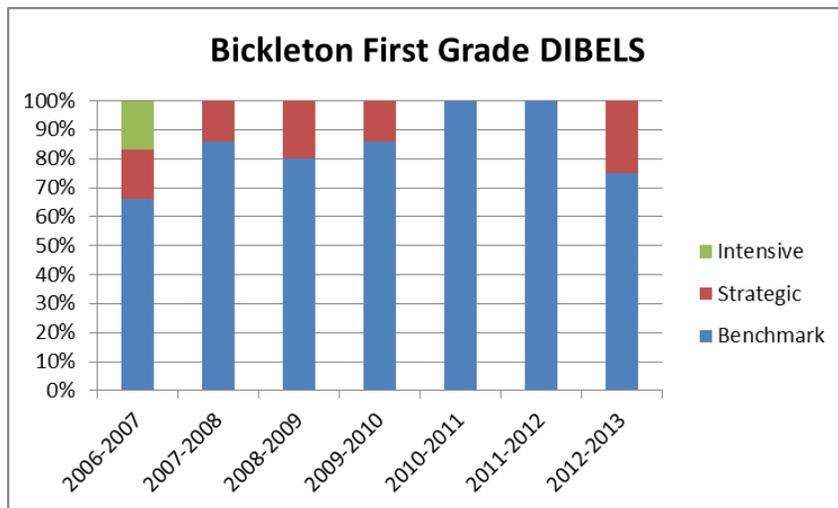
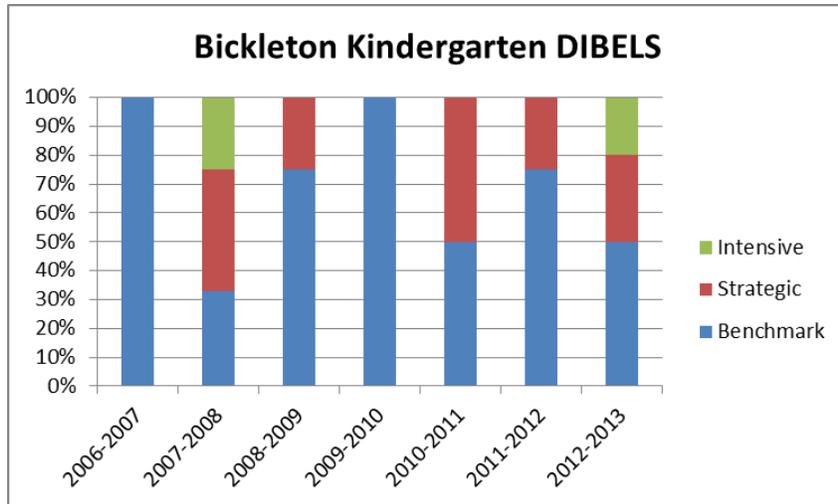
Both Paterson and Bickleton provided district level assessment information at SBE request. Paterson provided Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) scores, with explanatory narrative. Bickleton provided DIBELS scores. The charts below show the mean growth for reading and math in Paterson for three cohorts during the waiver period.



*Note: Paterson is a non-high district, so class year indicates year in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.*

The Class of 2014 saw a decline in growth in math and reading over the last three years. The Class of 2015 saw a decline in growth in 2011-2012, but an increase in growth the following year. The Class of 2016 saw an increase in growth in 2011-12 in math, followed by a decline in 2012-2013, and a steady decline in reading growth. These are mean growth rates for each class; some individuals grew at much higher, and some much lower, rates each year. No MAP scores were provided for pre-waiver years.

The charts below show end of the year DIBELS results from Bickleton for 2006-07 to 2012-13. Unlike the Paterson MAP data, these data are not divided by cohort, but by grade level. The charts show the percentage of students meeting the overall benchmark by the end of the year, though five individual categories are assessed: initial sound fluency, letter naming fluency, phoneme segmentation, nonsense word fluency, and word use fluency.



*Note: Benchmark=meeting or exceeding target, Strategic=needs strategic interventions in specific areas to reach target, Intensive=needs intensive interventions to meet targets.*

## Financial Impacts

Because the stated purpose of the waiver is “economy and efficiency,” the board also examined financial data for the districts with current waivers, Paterson and Bickleton. The board did not examine financial data for Lyle because of the short time under its waiver.

Despite initial assumptions that assessing the financial impacts of the flexible schedule would be more straightforward than the academic impacts, the board encountered similar issues in attributing changes to the flexible calendars. Such factors as collective bargaining contracts, fuel prices, and programmatic changes complicate identification of the effects of the four-day week on district costs and savings. Recent changes in funding formulas and increased allocations from budget actions in the 2013 session also make assessing impacts difficult.

The Education Commission of the States reported in 2011 that 120 school districts in 17 states, in efforts to achieve savings in operations, had adopted schedules to maintain instructional time while shortening the school week. A review of available research finds that savings from a four-day week vary across districts depending on programming. The most frequently cited study found that savings tend to be less than anticipated. This is because educator pay and benefits are the single largest expense in public schools, and “moving to a four-day week still requires instructional staff to work the same amount of hours per week – just spread over four days rather than five.” Savings in utilities and maintenance are reduced if facilities are kept open on the fifth day for noninstructional activities. The savings identified were a small percentage of a district’s overall budget (on average, between 0.4% and 2.5%). They could nevertheless still be significant in terms of staff or instructional programming that could be supported by reallocating resources. Transportation was found to be the area of greatest savings. (Griffith, 2011.)

Most transportation savings resulting from a four-day week accrue to the state, which by rule prorates the transportation allocation at a daily rate, decreasing the funding a district receives when it departs from a traditional schedule. Paterson continues to transport high school students into neighboring Prosser on the fifth day, so does not receive a prorated allocation. The recent changes in the state transportation funding formula pose additional challenges to calculating transportation savings from a modified calendar.

Board staff consulted with OSPI Apportionment and Financial Services to attempt to estimate savings from the flexible calendar to the districts. OSPI staff indicated that it would not be possible to assess the savings, replicate the districts’ analysis and attribute changes to the flexible calendar because of factors not reflected in financial data collected by the state. Shifts in staff mix, programming decisions, contract negotiations, utility rates, and other factors contribute to district costs and are not captured in current reporting. SBE asked the districts to provide updated savings estimates, with explanation of the methodology used. The districts responded with updated estimates, but not with their methodology, so it is unclear how savings were calculated.

In information provided to the SBE, Bickleton stated that its largest savings were in transportation, followed by classified staff. Paterson reported that its greatest savings were in classified staff. In its application for renewal of its waiver, Paterson estimated that transportation spending had actually increased by \$2,589. Classified staff savings were estimated at \$35,657. This was accomplished in large part by reducing the number of teaching assistants as well as the number of days. There are discrepancies, however, between the staffing levels reported in the applications and those in state staffing reports, which we were unable to reconcile. Bickleton estimated that the district saved \$16,247 in staff costs as a result of the modified calendar. It is also a non-union district and so has more flexibility in staffing decisions. Lyle, which discontinued its flexible schedule after two years, indicated that it did not

reduce salaries of classified or certificated staff because of negotiated contracts, decreasing the possible savings from its waiver.

Both Paterson and Bickleton stated that savings from their waivers allowed them to continue reading programs and increased hours of kindergarten by preserving classified staff. (Paterson will receive state funding for full-day kindergarten beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.) Both districts had received grants for Reading First prior to 2009 and used savings to replace those funds and preserve some of the programming. Paterson has also repurposed savings on classified staff for an additional 0.73 FTE certificated staff to support a new block schedule.

### **Other District Impacts**

The waiver renewal applications from Paterson and Bickleton described how the flexible week was implemented, including activities conducted on the now-free Fridays. Paterson has instituted "Adventure Fridays" on select Fridays during the school year for enrichment programs such as field trips, fine arts, and special projects. Bickleton has used the Fridays for professional development activities, and is working on a school-to-work program with wind turbine companies in the area. Both districts also report using time outside of the student day for instructional and team planning, staff meetings, and professional development, though do not specify if this is limited to Fridays or distributed throughout the week.

Impacts on other aspects of the school community, such as child nutrition programs, childcare, and districts' ability to recruit and retain staff were not studied independently due to the lack of capacity for such an analysis, lack of available data, and difficulty attributing observed changes to the flexible schedule. Some of these areas were addressed in the districts' renewal applications. Both Paterson and Bickleton explained that childcare for working parents was not a major concern in their communities, where many parents work at home on farms or have multiple caregiver options, such as nearby relatives. A letter from Lyle's current superintendent, provided in response to an SBE request for feedback on the waiver program, cited childcare as a concern in her community and one of the reasons for discontinuing the flexible calendar. Bickleton does not participate in the free and reduced price lunch program. Paterson provides a free breakfast and lunch for every student in the district, using local dollars to supplement the federal reimbursements, and provides these meals on "Adventure Fridays."

The public comment submitted as part of the applications was very similar for the two districts, and overwhelmingly positive.

### **Other Considerations**

In examining this issue, the board recognized that Washington accounts for the diseconomies of scale faced by small districts through the small school and remote and necessary factors in the school funding formula. These factors increase the state funding allocation for small districts to alleviate resource challenges inherent in serving small student populations or being located in rural locations. The small school factor is intended to address some of the same issues as the economy and efficiency waiver.

The board also notes very limited demand for the waivers over their short history. Just four districts have applied for economy and efficiency waivers. There were 52 districts in 2011-12 with enrollment of fewer than 150. Three districts – Bickleton, Paterson, and Mill A – requested waivers under this statute. There were 53 districts with enrollment between 150 and 500. One district (Lyle) requested and received a waiver under this statute, but abandoned its use after two years. While there is a tight cap on the number of waivers that may be granted through this program (two waivers for districts with fewer than 150 students, three for districts between 150

and 500), it still appears a low number of applications given the number of districts that would be eligible. Expansion of the program to include more and larger districts may not, then, elicit increased interest.

## Attachment A: Student Achievement Data Tables

### Paterson and Comparison Districts

<b>Reading % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Paterson	67%	69%	72%	68%	54%	57%	66%	72%
Prescott Elementary	44%	62%	60%	77%	56%	53%	51%	59%
Manson Middle	61%	58%	57%	53%	57%	51%	49%	43%

<b>Writing % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Paterson	70%	60%	65%	67%	63%	67%	38%	53%
Prescott Elementary	82%	47%	41%	50%	57%	76%	29%	27%
Manson Middle	19%	75%	63%	59%	55%	49%	52%	40%

<b>Math % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Paterson	41%	51%	51%	43%	43%	46%	52%	54%
Prescott Elementary	24%	38%	42%	35%	42%	52%	41%	53%
Manson Middle	36%	44%	42%	30%	41%	36%	39%	32%

<b>Science % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Paterson	27%	46%	23%	23%	16%	35%	69%	42%
Prescott Elementary	6%	19%	10%	11%	0%	27%	25%	42%
Manson Middle	8%	36%	52%	25%	40%	48%	47%	38%

### Bickleton and Comparison Districts

<b>Reading % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bickleton	89%	89%	92%	80%	69%	69%	71%	65%
Trout Lake School	68%	67%	72%	64%	66%	61%	74%	67%
Orchard Prairie Elementary	81%	94%	86%	62%	74%	73%	71%	79%

<b>Writing % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bickleton	73%	55%	70%	50%	79%	57%	70%	61%
Trout Lake School	73%	83%	62%	67%	58%	86%	73%	77%
Orchard Prairie Elementary	50%	92%	60%	64%	81%	94%	64%	76%

<b>Math % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bickleton	54%	64%	63%	59%	54%	64%	60%	43%
Trout Lake School	55%	58%	52%	49%	45%	35%	54%	49%
Orchard Prairie Elementary	78%	80%	81%	67%	57%	67%	64%	69%

<b>Science % Met Standard</b>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Bickleton	64%	36%	50%	85%	43%	79%	67%	75%
Trout Lake School	38%	43%	43%	38%	32%	45%	82%	81%
Orchard Prairie Elementary	14%	20%	40%	13%	10%	56%	67%	50%

**Attachment B: Letter for Former Lyle Superintendent Huffman**



LYLE SCHOOL DISTRICT #406  
625 Keasey Avenue  
P.O. Box 368  
Lyle, WA 98635  
509-365-2191 – Phone  
509-365-5000 – FAX

Dear State Board of Education Directors,

*Robin  
Pod*  
Lyle School District has completed one year of our Flex Schedule Pilot Program. We have realized some moderate success and have saved some money in the process.

The administration team has looked at the savings, student opportunities, community input and staff participation during the flexible schedule. We have determined that the 180 day calendar with 4 LID days will better suit our situation for the 2011-2012 year.

A summary of the year follows with Flexible Fridays;

Savings in dollars;

Transportation- \$800-1,000 per month depending on market price which is going up daily.

Utilities- \$2-300 per month, includes two campuses/bus garage/shop.

Food Service- \$3-400 per month, no breakfast on Flex Day, cooks usually 'clean out' the frig on a Flex Day using up overstock and everyone gets a large variety to choose from.

Salaries- \$4-600 per month depending on those who choose not to work. No salaries were cut because it would have cost too much to deal with the union hassles. Staff is given the choice to take a WOP day if they don't want to work or personal leave.

State Board of Education

FEB 14 2011

An Equal Opportunity District

Received

Total savings when all items are considered along with bus maintenance, utilities, salaries, fuel and less use of equipment will probably max out at around \$25-30,000 annually.

Positive effects of flexible scheduling;

Student- Time to access tutoring, extended drama/band rehearsals, homework time, work on culminating projects, community service, long sports practices, not missing class for long sports trips, work one extra day at a job for savings and outdoor time.

Staff- Teach a class they have expertise in and don't have the time for, professional development, community involvement, curriculum/committee work, assist with band/drama/sports events and creatively use the time to help students they have identified needing help.

Community- Work on school improvement team, teach a hobby/skill/trade to students and adults, take a kid fishing, family time and being available to tutor or mentor.

This idea of removing the 180 day requirement will prove to be beneficial for student learning, financial health, common sense management and a step forward in allowing competent educators to teach our students.

The hourly regulation needs to be the main topic after the 180 days is buried. More time should be required and local districts should be given the chance to decide how they will use that time. An obstacle to the current system will definitely be Collective Bargaining Agreements, Unions and buy in from current staff.

We at the Lyle School District have not totally explored all the facets of a flexible schedule. At this point in time our theme my well be "The Flexible Schedule in an Inflexible Environment".

Sincerely,

  
Martin Huffman, Superintendent

**Attachment C: Letter for Lyle Superintendent Hill**



LYLE SCHOOL DISTRICT #406  
625 Keasey Avenue  
P.O. Box 368  
Lyle, WA 98635  
509-365-2191 – Phone  
509-365-5000 – FAX

October 23, 2013

Good Evening:

I wanted to take a few minutes to respond to your questions regarding the impact to our instructional program as a result of the 4 day school week implemented for 2 years in the Lyle School District.

Lyle is a small district with about 220 students and around 20 staff.

To compile these comments I interviewed certificated and classified staff employed by the Lyle School District during the implementation of the 4 day school week. I visited with 5 certificated staff and 2 paraprofessionals. I also visited with three parents.

There was general consensus on the following points:

From the perspective of staff:

- The plan was promoted to the staff and community as a “cost savings” plan, but little savings were actually realized. This is because transportation reimbursement from the state was reduced. There were no salary reductions for either certificated or classified staff – none were negotiated. Staff did not lose salary money and no positions were cut or reduced. Staff were also in the buildings on Fridays (classified were cleaning and teachers were often present) so there was no savings on energy costs.
- The school day was not increased. As a result of less instructional time, staff restructured their curriculum and eliminated 20% of their program. This resulted in less learning for students.
- Fridays were intended to be a day for students to receive extra help, but students rarely attended. There was greater attendance at the elementary.
- On those occasions when teachers were able to meet with students who were struggling, it was wonderful. If a student had missed a day of school or needed extra help, this was a great opportunity to do so.
- Some staff offered fun “elective” type things on Fridays (cooking, etc). That was fun—but most staff did not do this and there was no requirement that they do so.
- Any field trips that were scheduled were required to take place on Friday. That was a good thing but only impacted one or two teachers/classrooms.
- There was greater attendance at the elementary on Fridays, but during the first year certificated staff members were not required to be at school every Friday. As a result, if students came in for help, the only staff available to assist might be a parapro who was not aware of the area where specific help was needed. This created a lot of confusion. The second year it worked better because all certificated staff were required to be present. When students needed help the teacher was there to provide the assistance. On those occasions, it was of great benefit.
- Transportation was not available and most Lyle students do not drive (Lyle is approximately 80% free and reduced) so few students could take advantage – or wanted to take advantage—of the extra help/support. If transportation had been provided, it might have been more successful.
- At the most, there might have been one or two students at the secondary school on a Friday getting help. (For those students, however, it was a positive experience according to teaching staff). At the elementary it might have been up to 5 students on any given occasion.

- On Friday bus drivers were still paid – they did grounds and other work.
- There was no formal professional development planned or provided to staff on Fridays.
- The plan needed better structure. Mr. Huffman may have had good vision but it was not realized. There was no requirement that students attend and no formal structure for student interventions. With a better plan in place and transportation provided, it might have been successful

**From the perspective of parents:**

- Day care was a major problem...parents who worked had to make arrangements and pay additional fees for day care for their children on Friday. Parents did not support the program.
- Students who were struggling did not receive targeted assistance. They missed out on important structured school time which was needed for learning. There was no formal intervention schedule so parents could not “count” on students getting extra assistance.
- Three days off from school on a regular basis was too long. Students lost learning – especially some of the struggling students. When they returned to school after 3 days weekends they had to “start over” in their learning.

If you need more information please let me know. This is not a comprehensive report but just random comments that I “pulled together” from interviewing staff and parents. In general, there seems to be consensus around this topic. It was not a popular program in Lyle. As I was interviewing staff and parents, I had to be certain that they knew that I was not planning to reintroduce it!

I know you are speaking directly with Superintendent Huffman and I am sure he can give you a better perspective on the plan and its implementation.

Sincerely,

Glenys Hill

## **Attachment D: Additional Materials from Paterson**

Paterson provided a letter, updated estimated savings and other renewal application components, an analysis of MSP scores, Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) data, and student grades. The MAP data and student grades include student identifying information and so are not attached here.



# PATERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 50

P.O. Box 189 – Paterson, WA 99345 – Phone (509)875-2601 – Fax (509) 875-2067

November 8, 2013

Jack Archer  
Director, Basic Education Oversight  
State Board of Education  
State Board of Education  
600 Washington Street SE  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Mr. Archer:

The Paterson School District is submitting the information that you requested on October 18, 2013. Please let me know if you require anything additional.

While the Paterson School District originally adopted the four day calendar as a way to save programs during a time of extreme fiscal crisis statewide, what we discovered were some really exciting and welcomed bonuses:

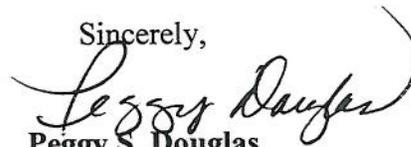
- increased student attendance
- increased instructional seat time
- reinvigorated teachers
- decreased work- hour absences of the instructional staff
- decreased student discipline
- raised test scores and improved student learning

Not only are our students doing better academically, they are in school at a higher engagement level and our teachers are happier and better prepared.

While the five day school week is traditional I believe that we have demonstrated that it is not the most appropriate system for all school districts. I would encourage that this waiver not only be allowed to continue for Paterson School District, but that it should be opened up to all other districts in the State who want to explore potential new and better ways to improve education.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any clarification on what has been provided. Our district is excited to move forward with this process.

Sincerely,

  
Peggy S. Douglas  
Superintendent

File

***“Estimate the expected savings in expenditures for substitutes, fuel, food service, utilities, and salaries of district and school employees.” Could you please provide a specific estimate of the expected savings for at least school year 2012-13 (and beyond if possible?)***

The District realized a greater savings (\$47,766) in expenditures during the 2012/2013 school year than what was initially projected during the 2008/09 SY (\$28,500). (See chart below.) The overall savings has come from the very purposeful restructuring of our teaching assignments and the way that instruction has been delivered to students. We have been very careful in looking at how we can best make use of the limited dollars that we have available to the district, and have cut extra classroom support for teachers to the barest essentials, while maximizing the best “bang for our educational dollar.”

	2008-09 SY BEFORE Modified Calendar (5 TAs – 5 days per week)		AFTER Modified Calendar (3 TAs – 4 days per week)
	Hrs./Day	Hours/Week (5 days)	Hours/Week (4 days)
Teacher Asst	41	205	77.0
5 bus drivers	17.67 hrs/day	88.35	75.68*
Food Services Asst	3	15	12
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>308.35HRS/WK</b>	<b>164.68 HRS/WK</b>
		Hours/Week (5 days)	Hours/Week (4 days)
<b>REDUCED CLASSIFIED HRS/WEEK with 4-Day/Week:</b>			<b>&lt;143.67&gt; HRS/WK</b>

	2008/09 Estimated Savings	2012/13 SY Actual Savings
Personnel (Classified):	\$ (11,000)	\$ (35,657)
Benefits (34%):	\$ (3,350)	\$ (12,123)
Substitutes:	\$ (1,500)	\$ (987)
Utilities:	\$ (3,000)	\$ (2,404)
Custodial Supplies	\$	\$ (854)
Food:	\$ (5,120)	\$ 1,671
Transportation (Fuel/Tires):	\$ (4,500)	\$ 2,589
<b>TOTAL Economies /Efficiencies SAVINGS:</b>	<b>\$ (28,470)</b>	<b>\$ (47,766)</b>

**SAVINGS – CLASSIFIED STAFFING**

*NOTE: \* The bus hours/week includes the additional hours on the Fridays for our high school route which runs 5 days each week.*

The District does not anticipate any additional reductions or cuts to classified staffing. We anticipate that the saved funds for classified staff (\$35,657) will remain relatively static in the coming years. Benefits (\$12,123) will also remain relatively constant as they are driven directly by salary. We should also continue to see a savings in contracted subs (\$1,000-2,000) as staff are scheduling more of their personal appointments for Fridays. However, as we move into the TPEP and the new State requirements for science the professional development needs for staffing may require more subs during the week. Currently, however, staff attempt to schedule as many professional learning days as possible on Fridays.

I would anticipate that we will see an increase in utilities and fuel/tires during the next several years as the cost of doing business in all of these areas continues to increase.

Food services costs will also increase. Students eating breakfast and lunch has grown from 49% - Breakfast, 70%-Lunch in 2008/09 to 91.5% -breakfast and 90.1- lunch during the first 20 days of the current school year. (See chart below.) At Paterson ALL children eat for free, regardless of their household income. In the Fall of 2009 the community made the decision that all students would be provided access to free breakfasts and lunches regardless of their family's ability to pay. This is significant when you consider that the poverty level is greater than 72% in our area. The additional costs for meals, which is not covered by the NSBLP requirements, is supported through local M&O tax dollars.

School Year	Average % Eating Breakfast Daily	Average % Eating Lunch Daily
2008-09	49%	70%
2009-10	61%	89%
2010-11	76%	93%
2011-12	81%	83%
2012-13	77%	88%
2013-14(1 <sup>ST</sup> 20 DAYS)	91.5%	90.1%

**What program changes were implemented as a result of the waiver.**

With the implementation of the modified calendar we made some major instructional changes to our Grade 3-8 classrooms. Those changes included moving away from what had been our tradition of having 2 grades per classroom which were taught by one teacher with the support of one TA for most of the day to the following:

- Modifications included moving the 6<sup>th</sup> grade to the middle school block
- Eliminating 2 TA (8 hr/day) position
- Increasing certificated instructional staff by a .73 FTE.
  - With the increase in FTE we now had 2.73 FTE teachers teaching at the Grades 3-5 block, and 2.73 FTE teachers teaching at the 6-8<sup>th</sup> Grades block.

- All of the grades 3-8 teachers moved to an instructional model of “teaching to their strengths” and students moved to the “Walk to Learn” model.
- We have adopted the Elementary AVID Program K-8 (all teachers have received training).
  - Students start their morning in their “home room” and the grades 3-8 children moved throughout the day to their classes with their AVID binders which contain their student agendas, Cornell notes, and pencil pouches containing all of the necessary supplies that they will need.
  - AVID has helped to provide each child with the necessary structure and tools to become very organized -- and has been beneficial to their overall academic success.

#### **How were monetary savings from the waiver redirected to support student learning.**

The economies and efficiencies that we have realized through the modified calendar waiver have allowed us to maintain the fidelity of our already successful programs. With the loss of state and federal grants we have been able to redirect the monetary savings we have found to maintain the fidelity of our very successful programs.

The waiver has allowed us to maintain the fidelity of our already successful programs. With the loss of state and federal grants we have been able to redirect the monetary savings back into our Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs. Specifically, the savings has allowed for the following:

- The continuation of our Pre-K program for children ages 3-5
- The continuation of additional hours in our Kindergarten program
  - Prior to the 2-13/14 school year, the State only supported our district’s Kinders attending half time. The District was able to redirect recaptured funds from the modified calendar back into our Kinder program increasing the number of hours that we were able to provide direct instruction to students by 208 hours per year.
- The hiring of a partial FTE certificated teacher to help support reading and language arts in grades 2 through 5.
- Teacher assignments changed to “block scheduling” – allowing teachers in grades 3-8 to teach to their strengths. The district has successfully utilized the “walk to learn” process for students across all curricular areas in these grades.
- Personalized education meets the needs of students
  - Additional 55 minutes of direct instruction provided during the school day for math, language arts and reading interventions.
  - Personalized education has positively impacted fragile learners, and in particular our ESL students
  - Personalized education has positively impacted high-level learners

**How are unscheduled days used for activities such as professional development, planning, tutoring, special programs, and to make up for lost days due to weather or other disruptions to the calendar.**

- Building staff meetings and staff development opportunities are planned outside of the instructional day
  - Reduced the need for substitutes
  - Reduced the disruption to the student learning process
- Teachers do all individual and block/team planning outside of the regular student day
  - Provides additional time during the student instructional calendar for direct instruction
- Days lost to inclement weather (Snow Days) are made up on the unscheduled Fridays
  - This has allowed the District to maintain the integrity of the calendar year.
- Adventure Friday concept developed and implemented
  - Children return to the school on select Fridays during the calendar year for STEM enrichment programs. The district uses funding from M&O levy dollars as well as from a federal GearUP grant to support these activities.
  - **The Adventure Friday days are NOT part of the school calendar. They provide up to 40 hours of additional direct instruction to students on top of the 1058 hours that they receive during a normal school year.**

**Explain the expected impact on the ability to recruit and retain employees in education support positions.**

The reduction in funding from the State found the Paterson School District in a situation where we had to eliminate two of our classified teacher assistant positions. We also lost the funding for part of our certificated reading specialist. The modified/flexible calendar allowed us to retain the existing support staff.

- The loss of hours for classified employees when we moved from a 5-day calendar to a 4-day calendar can be partially recouped by offering the staff the option of working on the non-scheduled Fridays using Federal and M&O tax dollars.
- Because of the remoteness of the location of our school's campus, and the lack of housing in the district, most employees must travel up to 70 miles per day to work. By moving to a modified calendar, staff have been able to save up to 20% of their out-of-pocket travel expenditures.

**Explain the expected impact on students whose parents work during the missed school day.**

- We are a unique community. Because we are a remote and rural farming community, many families have at least one, if not both, parents off work from the time harvest ends in the Fall until crops are again ready to be planted in the Spring
  - Adventure Friday dates are purposely clustered in early Fall and late Spring when parents are working

- Many parents work a modified schedule during the winter months. (Monday thru Thursday)
- The pay day for many of the workers is Thursday evening so they plan their shopping trips and appointments for Fridays. Because of the long distance (up to 45 miles one way) for parents to travel for services, parents often plan routine appointments for their children on the same day that they do their banking and shopping (Friday)
- The modified calendar has resulted in lower student absenteeism.
- The longer educational day (8:15-3:40 PM) has not greatly impacted most of our students
  - Prior to the implementation of the modified calendar, many students would arrive at the school before 8:00 AM and would stay for after-school activities on most evenings until 4:10 PM

**Explain how instruction will be adjusted to accommodate the waiver calendar for elementary and secondary grade levels.**

- PACING CALENDARS: Prior to implementing the modified calendar in January 2010, the staff adjusted their pacing calendars so that they could complete a full year's worth of student learning (180 day) in a 146 day schedule.
- INTEGRITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL BLOCKS: The educational week has been structured to maintain the number of minutes provided in each core curricular area.
- INTERRUPTIONS: Interruptions are kept to a minimum during the regular school week.
  - Many of the "other" activities (field trips, student leadership meetings, etc.) have been shifted to Adventure Fridays.
- ABSENTEEISM for both staff and students has been greatly reduced.
  - Parents and staff have been able to take advantage of the unscheduled Fridays to take care of personal appointments.
- INTERVENTION TIME: More Tier 1 and Tier 2 Intervention time is available in the core curriculum areas every day.
  - Additional 20-55 minutes in math, language arts and science
- ADVANCED LEARNERS: More learning opportunities are available for advanced students: HS Algebra, HS Geometry, Speech, Honors Reading and Math Team Competitions.

**Additional benefits from the modified calendar:**

- Enhanced the overall quality of instruction – there are longer blocks of time available to complete lessons such as science labs
- More opportunities to personalize education to meet the needs of our students.
- Lower absenteeism of students and teachers.
- Additional direct instruction time available for math and reading interventions. (This has positively impacted our fragile learners, and in particular our ESL students.)
- Fewer long commutes for students. (Many of our children spent more than 1.5 hours per day on the school bus.)

**Community and Staff Input into the Modified Calendar:**

The District provides frequent open meeting opportunities for public comments on the modified flexible calendar. These included:

- School Board Meetings
- Parent Welcome Back Night/Back to School Night
- PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) Meetings
- PAC (Migrant Parent Advisory Committee) Meetings
- Staff Meetings
- Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences

**PUBLIC HEARINGS: Info from some of the Discussions:**

- The issue of the modified/flexible calendar has been brought before parents and staff at a variety of different meetings (PTO, PAC, school board, 1:1 and small group discussions) since January of 2009. A variety of issues were discussed with the various groups and together we made modifications to our calendar. Some of those changes included the following:
  - LENGTH OF DAY: Mrs. Douglas provided information on three different scenarios for length of school day and school year. Initially, the District did not anticipate a change to the start of the school day (8:20 AM); however, at the conclusion of the 2010/11 school year the consensus of the staff and parents was to change the start of the day of 8:15 AM. This would increase the school year by an additional 11.84 hours per year, and would allow us to put a few additional extra activities – field trips and assembly – back into the regular calendar year without it negatively impacting programs.
    - In 2011/12 we again reviewed the start schedule and made modified the start time to 8:10 AM. This time has worked very well for everyone and is still in place for the 2013/14 school year.
    - The end-of-day times reviewed with staff and parents prior to the initial start of the modified calendar (Spring 2009) included 3:30, 3:35 and 3:40. The unanimous consensus of the group was to support starting the modified calendar schedule January 4, 2010. Parents also unanimously approved a daily schedule that would have students end their academic day at 3:40 PM.
      - This time has worked very well for everyone, and we have continued to use this as our end time for the 2013/14 school year.

**SUMMARY OF PARENT/COMMUNITY and STAFF COMMENTS:** The overall consensus of parents and staff is that they are very supportive of the District's modified/flexible calendar. I have listed below some of the comments for your review:

**Parent/Community Comments:**

- I really like the school's plan for the off-schedule activities that you have planned for Fridays. This day would be a little shorter (10:00 AM to 3:00 PM) so it would be perfect for younger children. It would be parent choice if their child attended 1 or all of these days. I also like the idea of having longer blocks of time for activities such as robotics, drama, sports camps.
- What about kinders? Does the school have a plan to help lessen the impact of the longer school day for these young children?
  - *The District modified the kindergarten schedule to include a 30 minute "rest" period immediately following lunch and recess. Blankets were purchased and issued to each student to keep in their cubby. The teacher reads to students during this time. Students may sleep, or use the time to just listen to the story or color quietly.*
  - *By mid-year most students no longer fall asleep during the rest time. Everyone benefits from the short break in the schedule.*
  - *During the October parent-student-teacher conferences parents are polled, and all are pleased with the addition of the rest period.*
- My children were missing a lot of school on Fridays. This was our day to do our banking, shopping and doctor appointments.
  - *Appointments -- We are a very unique community. Because we are a remote and rural farming community many parents already work a modified schedule during the winter months. (Monday thru Thursday). The pay day for most of the farm workers is Thursday evening so they plan their shopping trips and appointments for Fridays. Because of the long distances (up to 45 miles one way) for parents to travel for services, parents often plan routine medical and dental appointments for their children on the same day that they do their banking and shopping. The new calendar would allow parents to take their children without it negatively impacting their education.*
- Will parents need to provide lunch on these extra days?
  - *No, the district will continue to provide lunch and a snack on the off-schedule Fridays.*
- If I have to work late, can my child stay at the school longer?
  - *Yes. The parent is required to contact the school in advance. The superintendent and one teacher are usually at the school until 5:00-5:30. They have agreed that the student can stay with them on these occasions and parents can pick them up by 5:00.*
- I love having my kids home more!
- Children and I enjoy the schedule. We like it!
- We schedule all of our appointments for Fridays.
- When do we make up snow days?

- *Snow days are made up on the first available Friday following the missed day. This allows the district to maintain the integrity of the school year calendar.*
  
- Why do you have Adventure Fridays?
  - *We reviewed with parents that we use both M&O Levy and some federal grant dollars (GearUP) to bring students back in to provide the enrichment and enhancing programs that were cut from our school programs due to state budget cuts. These programs are optional...and parents can choose to have their child attend all, part or none of the Adventure Fridays. The off-schedule Friday activities are NOT part of the regular calendar year. The activities are all STEM based and focused on providing enrichment in the math and sciences.*
  
- Our dentist/orthodontist changed his schedule and no longer works on Fridays.
  
- I love the 4-day school weeks. Doesn't make a difference really.
  
- Great schedule! I love the 4 day school week. Enjoy having kids home with me more often during the week.
  
- We love the 4-day school week. Appreciate the grade blocks. The teachers are doing an outstanding job!
  
- Muy Buena idea con nadamoa 4 dias a la semana. (We really like idea of 4-day week.)
  
- "What can we do to help make this continue to happen? I like it!"
  
- It was hard to adjust to the homework schedule and longer days at first. Now we use our Fridays to get homework completed and our weekends are free to do family activities.
  
- Love all of the activities on Adventure Fridays! The children love the extra science.
  
- We now schedule all of our appointments on Fridays. My children are missing less school.
  
- Absolutely love it!!! We feel very blessed to be in such a great environment for our kids. We are spoiled! My children are doing better in their classes.
  
- As a parent, I have found the extended day/no Friday weeks superior to the traditional shorter day/five day a week program. I find that we are able to spend more time together when we have a full day. We have more time to do educational activities at home and to discuss how they are doing in general. Furthermore, we are able to schedule medical and dental appointments for these days, thereby eliminating having to do so during school time. My children prefer the four-day week as well. Thank you for creating this opportunity for our families.

**CERTIFICATED STAFF COMMENTS:**

- **MONICA BURNETT – Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Teacher:** “Mrs. Burnett, did you know we are 5 lessons ahead of HMS in Algebra?” one of my students asked me excitedly one morning. After questioning him about what exactly he was saying, he told me that he was doing homework with an old friend and we were five lessons ahead, “and,” he exclaimed, “they skipped chapter one!” That was hard for me to believe because we are on a modified calendar and they are not. How could this be? When my superintendant asked each of the teachers at Paterson to explain the benefits of the modified calendar, I remembered this conversation from just two weeks ago. I know this is true because I have a family friend who attends HMS and is struggling in Algebra, so I have been helping her at night. We really are a full five lessons ahead, and to boot my students are not failing their chapter exams. She told me that many of her classmates are. How could this be? Well, after much reflection I realized that unlike large schools, we have the ease of not having to spend 5 minutes in passing time and 5 minutes in roll call for each period. When my students come in for an hour of instruction in Algebra, we work for the entire hour. I have time to monitor the progress and work with kids in small groups or individually if they are struggling. We have four solid hours of Algebra that is 240 minutes a week. We don’t allow for interruptions in the daily schedule and any “fun” activities are saved for our Adventure Fridays. Even the Leadership kids when they want to do activities with the classes, give up their recess times to organize games and competitions because we cherish our class time.

The same is true for all of the middle school classes. Our reading classes are 240 minutes a week. Our Language art/usage/vocabulary is an additional 120 minutes a week. When I asked some of my students why they liked the modified calendar one student said, “Because we only have four days a week. We know we have to work really hard, and we don’t get bored.”

The longer days allow for some flexibility when scheduling intervention. Our current sixth grade needs additional math time so they have 480 minutes of math a week.

All of this is a long-winded explanation about how beneficial the modified calendar has been for our students. Aside from their work-ethic being developed, the families use their Fridays to do their shopping and most of their medical appointments. (The exception seems to be the orthodontist, who take Friday’s off as well.) My students are generally the older members of the family and the parents who are monolingual Spanish take their kids to town for translating. Fridays have become that day. Thanks for your efforts, *Monica Burnett, Middle School Teacher*

- **KERRY EVANS -- 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades:** In my opinion, the students are more attentive in class and they know that there’s not as much down time, so we’ve got to get in there and do it. There is more time for Instructional time also with the longer days. We have an hour for each subject every day and more time for additional intervention support if the students need it. Also, with Friday off gives students more time for studying, and working on classroom projects. This extra day off reflects in their completed assignments and homework handed in and higher grades. Students absences have also gone down in my classroom with the new schedule. Having a day free for doctor’s appointments help keeps student bodies in the classroom including mine. I try to make all my doctor appointments on Fridays also. The longer days has given me more time for planning, correcting papers, and professional development.

- **WENDY MEIRNDORF -- Grades 2-5 Teacher:** I'm very pleased to be teaching in Paterson this year. I'm a first year teacher and this is my first experience with a modified schedule. I have had experience substituting in the Paterson District for the last 11 years and have experienced working in the regular 5 day week schedule. I can honestly say I have not witnessed the "Friday slump" that seemed to previously occur on Fridays during a 5 day week schedule. I have also worked and student taught in other districts in the Lower Yakima Valley and frequently witnessed "Friday slumps" where students are tired and disengaged on Fridays. As a teacher, I absolutely love the four day schedule. It allows for longer blocks of time per subject with my students, and instruction time doesn't feel rushed. I'm currently teaching reading, writing, and social studies and am able to cover 5 days worth of instruction per the 4 day week. The students seem to really thrive in this schedule and routine, and I have noticed few absences since the start of the school year. Thursdays are a very focused and intentional teaching day, not just the end of the week. Professionally, having no students on Fridays has allowed me to better prepare my lessons and correct papers. I also have been able to attend professional development trainings on Fridays as well and not miss time in the classroom.
- **PATTY CLARK—Kindergarten Teacher and Parent:** This is Paterson's first year of implementing WAKIDS, full day, every day Kindergarten. The four day week is excellent for the young children. It allows them all the benefits of full time Kinder students, but gives them an extra day to rest and rejuvenate for the next week. Most families appreciate more family time for appointments, outings, and other activities. When students are sick, they have an extra day to recover instead of spreading the germs or missing another school day. This schedule also allows time for students to be engaged in extra-curricular activities. Because of our locale, piano lessons, gymnastics, sports, etc. are miles away. Parents now, can arrange for many of these extra-curricular activities on Fridays or Thursday evenings. Many Fridays are set aside to help students with big projects, such as the science fair. I appreciate Friday, because as a mom and teacher, I can work on lesson plans at home and prepare for the upcoming week. My daughter says it helps her have a more positive outlook on school. She is further along in Algebra, as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader than friends who are attending a five day calendar week of school. Many students can think more clearly in their home setting, to do homework, work on big projects, read books, and simply let their hair down and catch their breath from the vigorous schedules of a demanding world. There are fewer discipline problems, students are more responsible for their learning and engaged while here. The four day modified calendar has proven successful here at Paterson. We love it and the benefits create a healthier lifestyle for both students and teachers.
- **TONYA STEINBOCK – Grade 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Teacher:** In my opinion the four-day school schedule has been extremely beneficial for my students. The additional time during the school day has allowed me as a teacher to spend more time in each of the subject areas. It is much easier to finish a lesson given the additional instructional minutes allowed during the day. It was not uncommon to run out of class time before completing a lesson when our school was operating on the traditional five day week schedule with shorter school days. The unfinished lesson would then have to be carried over to the next school day which often resulted in the

momentum of the lesson being lost in reviewing. Additional time during the day has also given me more flexibility in scheduling interventions for my struggling students.

My students are more rested after having a three day weekend with their families. I have witnessed fewer student absences on the four day week schedule than on the five day a week schedule. I feel this is in part due to students and parents being given a non-school weekday in which to schedule routine healthcare and dental visits. Having Fridays as a non-student day has allowed me additional time to better prepare lesson plans, attend professional trainings, and spend Fridays in my classroom preparing for lessons to come. Additionally, I myself have fewer absences during the school week due to routine healthcare appointments for myself and my children. These appointments can now be scheduled on a Friday. This is a significant improvement for my classroom. Prior to our school moving to a four-day school week; an entire sick day would be used just for a dental cleaning. This is in part due to our remote location in relation to the location of the nearest healthcare or dental facility. The four-day school week has made a very positive impact on the lives of me, my co-workers, and my students.

- **COREY INGVALSON – 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades:** My superintendent requested information in regards to student achievement in relation to our modified calendar here at Paterson. Below I have listed the positives I have found when teaching with a modified calendar, as well as some accommodations we have established within the modified calendar.

Positives:

- Academic success from students has not declined because of the modified calendar.
- Flexibility in academic day and curriculum.
- Longer day provides for more topics/subjects to be covered.
- Longer weekend provides students with an opportunity to maximize the school week and use the weekend to enhance their learning experience or complete course work from the past week.
- Afterschool/Friday programs that enhance and enrich the learning process.
- Preparation for High School/College. The modified calendar has required that I present students with work that may exceed the school week on a more regular basis, requiring the students to take their coursework/projects/books home. This helps prepare students for the expectations that will be placed on them when they attend High School and eventually college.
- College Visitation trips scheduled for Fridays.
- Academic Enrichment and Enhancement opportunities provided to students on Fridays.
- Teacher trainings or team collaboration meetings held on Friday so teachers are not missing valuable class time.
- Students are able to connect with their families, and not miss class time for family vacations as families can appropriately plan for vacations where there will be minimal class time missed.

Accommodations:

- Provide students with coursework that may exceed the school week so students are required to do more school work outside of school day.
- AVID Curriculum that promotes student agendas and calendars detailing daily, weekly, monthly happenings/expectations/assignments in class.

- Academic Support during lunch/after school during the school week.
- Transition support on Fridays offered to students who attend Prosser High School.
- It is hard for me to really find negatives about the transition, as student success has been maintained or has increased, and the flexibility with our schedule has brought so many positives to the school day.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call or email me directly. Corey Ingvalson, Paterson School District, [coreyi@paterson.wednet.edu](mailto:coreyi@paterson.wednet.edu), 509-875-2601

- **Betty Craig – Grades 2-5:** As we start another year on the modified, four day per calendar adopted by the Paterson School District and approved through the 2014/2015 school year, it would seem prudent to use the assessments available to all students as a barometer of how students achieve academically under such a schedule. MAP scores are what we have to compare our students from year to year and to other students across the United States. While no tests scores can be considered conclusive, they can be used comparably for matters such as this.

MAP Reading scores for students that attended the Paterson School both during the 2011/12 academic year and the 2012/2013 school year show the following:

1. There were 14 students who were third graders in the 2012/2013 school year that met that requirement. Of those 14, 13 either scored at the benchmark average for their grade or had their scores gain by 10 or more points. The point difference to stay at benchmark was nine points.
2. There were six of seven students who were fourth graders in the 2012/2013 school year that either scored at bench mark or saw a gain in their scores of at least 10 points. Again, the point difference to stay at benchmark was nine points.

While this may not show that the four day school week is aiding in the raising of scores, it does seem to show that it does not hinder that either. The students enrolled in the Paterson School, while using a modified, four day per week calendar, often score above their national peers. That, coupled the delight expressed by students' parents' and staff for the rigorous yet relaxed school week, should make it clear to all that for this place and these students, it is a schedule that should be allowed to continue.

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**ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING GROWTH:**

The Paterson School District will continue to use MAPS (Grade 2-8; 3X Yearly), MSP State Assessments (formerly called WASL), WLPT, student and staff attendance records, end of unit tests, teacher created assessments to analyze student achievement over the course of the waiver.

\* \* \* \* \*

**An Analysis of Paterson Student MSP Scores from 2010- Present**

Paterson School implemented the modified calendar in January of 2010. That spring, the state changed state assessments from WASL to MSP. The following commentary reflects our most recent graduates and the current students with respect to their state testing results from 2010 to the present.

- CLASS OF 2013: The students who graduated this last spring, the Paterson Class of 2013, showed tremendous growth in reading from Spring 2010, 5th grade, through Spring 2013, graduation. **Rising from 25% passing reading to 75%**. Likewise the growth in **math jumped from 19% to 58%**. The Paterson graduating Class of 2013 students **performed above the state average** of 66% passing in reading and statistically at the state average of 53% passing in math. Eighth grade also tests science and the state average is 64% this class showed **significant growth in science from 0% passing in Spring 2010 to 50% passing by graduation 2013**.
- CLASS of 2014: The current 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the Paterson Class of 2014 are currently performing statistically at the state average of 68% passing in reading and below the state average of 63% passing in math. They did however **grow from 37% passing reading in 2010 to 63% passing this past spring**. In math their progress has fluctuated but they did have an **overall growth of 13% increase**. Seventh grade also tests writing and the state average is 71% so this class is testing below the state average. Unfortunately their scores are dismal, however if you were to examine them closely, you would find that a 9 is a passing score and all of the students who did not meet standard in the Paterson Class of 2014 received an 8. The class is receiving intense writing this year.
- CLASS of 2015: The Paterson Class of 2015, our seventh grade students are a very high achieving group. They also had significant growth during the modified calendar pilot. In reading they **grew from a passing rate of 68% in third grade to a passing rate of 82% in sixth grade**. In **math their passing rate grew from 43% to 76%**. These students are currently **performing above the state average** of 71% passing in reading and above the state average of 59% passing in math.
- CLASS of 2016: There were only 7 students in the Paterson Class of 2016 last year, and each student was equal to 14%. In the 4th grade there were 8 students tested which meant each student was valued at 12.5%. This class had 11 students in the 3rd grade and each student equaled approximately 9 percentage points. There is obviously **room for growth in all areas**

before they go to high school in 2016. The students are currently performing below the state average of 72% passing in reading and below the state average of 62% passing in math. Fifth grade also tests science and the state average is 66% so this class is testing below the state average. This class is getting an extra hour of math intervention in AVID AM and PM.

- CLASS of 2017: The Paterson Class of 2017, our current 5th grade is consistent in their scores. There are 9 students who were tested and each student represents about 11 percentage points. The students are **currently performing statistically at the state average** of 72% passing in reading and slightly below the state average of 62% passing in math. Paterson Class of 2017 has a **55% passing rate in math**. Fourth grade also tests writing and the state average is 62% so this class is testing above the state average
  - CLASS of 2018: The Paterson Class of 2018, our current 4th grade had 14 students tested in the spring of 3rd grade. Each student represented approximately 7 percentage points. **For the first year testing, the students are currently performing statistically at the state average of 73% passing in reading. Our students were passing at a rate of 71%. Our students were slightly below the state average of 65% passing in math, as we had a passing rate of 50%.**
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## MAP Scores Narrative

Paterson School began the modified calendar in January of 2010. Over the past 3 years we have kept careful track of student progress using MAP testing data, MSP testing data and student grades. In general, the classes have seen at least one year's growth in students each year. Below is a narrative to supplement the numbers provided on the charts.

- **Class of 2014**, our current 8<sup>th</sup> grade class is showing significant growth as a class in math. In Winter 2010, when we began the modified calendar all of our current students, who were enrolled at the time were below grade level in math. While there is **steady progress shown for each student** (given the summer-slide scores), and by the beginning of this year, their eighth grade year, **4/9 or 44% are enrolled in algebra**. The other 5 students are in pre-algebra designed to meet their needs. Our lowest scoring student is brand new to our district this year, but we expect to see significant growth in her scores as well. The reading scores for this class, while not at grade level yet, show growth over the 3 year period. The growth has been slow, as 55% come from mono-lingual Spanish speaking homes and two of these 5 students, or 40% of the five still below level are also receiving special education services for reading. **With all of these factors 44% are at grade level in reading, even after the summer slide** where over half of the students were not exposed to very much English for 3 months.
- **Class of 2015**, our current 7<sup>th</sup> grade class is also doing really well. While each student has shown growth, **the majority of the students are exceeding grade level expectations**. In math, 12/16, or **75% of the class is in Algebra in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade**. The other four students or 25% of the students are in pre-algebra and receiving an additional 30 minutes of math a day for a total of 90 minutes of math a day. This adds up to 360 minutes of math a week at school. Although all students have grown over time, there are some oddities in the testing. There was a large

summer slide for two students this past summer. Two of the families have been experiencing major family drama and summer was not a positive experience. The growth this school year will be huge as they get back into the groove and learn beyond where they were last year. The students are generally successful in reading. 62.5% are at or above grade level beginning 7<sup>th</sup> grade. **At the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade (before summer slide) 75% of the students were at grade level in reading.** 5 of our students are receiving intervention for reading. They struggle with vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation as they are only exposed to English during the school day. 4 of the 5 students who are receiving intervention have made strides of 20 points or more in the last 3 years, however, we are still working hard with these kids. **The modified calendar has allowed us to capture 90 minutes a day in reading and 30 minutes a day in language arts everyday with these students.** Their fluency and love of reading has grown leaps and bounds, which will be seen in testing as time progresses.

- **Class of 2016**, our current 6<sup>th</sup> grade class, has been a low achieving class since before we started the modified calendar in 2010. In the fall of **2010 all of the students were 13 to 7 points below grade level on the MAP math test. By the end of last year the student had grown significantly. Only 3 tested below grade level and two of them were within 5 points of grade level.** They had grown from **0% meeting grade level standard to 50% meeting grade level standard in math.** In reading this group also struggles. **In Fall 2010 all of the students were struggling with students scoring from 19-14 points below grade level. By the end of last year, all of the students were reading at grade level.** That was tremendous growth in this class. Beginning this year, we have two brand new students who are mono-lingual Spanish speaking, thus you see the additional two scores that are very low starting this fall. The extended school day allows for them to have 3 hours of language development and 2 hours of math every day.
- **Class of 2017**, our current 5<sup>th</sup> grade class started MAP testing in second grade the year we implemented the modified calendar. When they were in **second grade only 28.5% of the students met the target goal in reading. Now at the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> grade 50% have met or exceeded the target goal.** At the end of 4<sup>th</sup> grade all but 2 of the students had met the target reading score. In math this group **started second grade with a meeting the target score of 28.5%. By the beginning of fifth grade that percentage was up to 50%.** In math the percentage grew from 42% to 60% at the beginning of fourth grade.
- **Class of 2018**, our current 4<sup>th</sup> grade class, showed 33.3% of the students were at or above grade level in reading at the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. This was the first time these students had ever encountered a standardized test on the computer. To date, the student scores have steadily increased. By the end of third grade the class size grew between 12 and 16 points and the percentage of students reaching the **target score grew to 42.8% as well.** (The choice to focus on the end of year scores is due to what is affectionately known as summer slide in education.) The individual student growth scores have increased. **For example one student went from a 188 in second grade to a 222 at the beginning of fourth grade. This increase is significant and places this student in the top percentiles nationally.** The target score for a beginning fourth grade student is 200. **In math the 53.8% of the students were at or above grade level**

**in the fall of the second grade. By end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, so as not to lose percentages from summer slide, they were scoring 71.4% at or above grade level in math.**

- **Class of 2019**, our current 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class, showed **37.5% of the students were at or above grade level in reading** at the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. This was the first time these students had ever encountered a standardized test on the computer. To date, the student scores have steadily increased. While percentage of grade level readers has not changed, the overall scores have jumped. For example one student went from a 146 to a 187, just three points shy of hitting the target score of 190. In math the 33% of the students were at or above grade level in the fall of the second grade. **By the fall of the third grade that percentage grew to 35%. While this may not seem significant the individual students made great strides in their math comprehension. One student jumped from a 155 to a 172 in math where the target score is a 190.**
- **Class of 2020**, our current 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class, has taken only one MAP test. The MAP testing begins in the fall of second grade. There are 12 students in the second grade and 7/12 or **58.3% of the students met the target score in reading. In math there were 12 students tested and 1/3 of them met the target goal.** Again, this is their first testing window so we have no growth to show as of now.

**Student Absence Comparisons**

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>2012</u>
Sick	349	Sick	212	Sick**	330	Sick	285
Appointments	93	Appointments	43	Appointments **	99	Appointments	58
Family Leave	129	Family Leave	87	Family Leave	67	Family Leave	82

\*\* March was a bad month for the flu at Paterson. We had 33 students leave at mid-day on one day alone. Parents picked up their children mid-week for many doctor appointments related to the flu and respiratory infections.

## **Attachment E: Additional Materials from Bickleton**

Bickleton provided a letter, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS), and attendance data for 2006-07 to 2008-09. The DIBELS and attendance data include student identifying information and so are not attached here.

# BICKLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 203

Ric Palmer-Superintendent  
Principal

P.O. Box 10, 100 Market St.  
Bickleton, WA 99322

Phone-509-896-5473  
Fax-509-896-2071

Judy Naught-Business Manager  
Administrative Assistant

November 13, 2013

State Board of Education  
Julia Suliman  
Policy Analyst

Dear Julia:

I hope you are in receipt of the information you requested. I am writing this correspondence in hope that it will give you and the State Board of Education a better understanding of what the 180-day waiver brings to a very small, rural school district.

I would first like to discuss the financial piece. Our bus drivers are our classroom aides. Last year, we saved \$16, 247.31 in wages and benefits by utilizing the waiver. We are non-union so that does not come into play. The money saved may not seem like a large amount to most folks but, it is huge for our district. This amount equates to three textbook adoptions for the district.

Transportation costs are a little more of a wash over the last couple of years. There are two main reasons for this; an added bus route so our students spend less time being transported (we are a 500 sq. mile district) and the fluctuation of fuel prices. Together, these have kept our transportation “wear and tear” costs about the same over time but, helps with the extended day.

We cannot calculate our soft costs such as heating and lighting as we are in our second year of a new school building that is three times the size of our old facilities. However, it is much more efficient.

Our teachers put in 1430 hours per year in the classroom and professional development with the waiver. Prior to the waiver, they put in 1440 hours. As you can see, these figures are almost the same. The biggest difference is the professional development piece. We are able to take 15 professional development days per year. This has allowed all staff to spend quality time in deep discussions and thorough trainings in required areas such as TPEP, EVAL, STEM, Common Core, Smarter Balanced, Safe Schools and various PLC’s to name a few. We would never be able to do this in the old system. This, I believe, has a direct impact on student learning. The staff is able to actually get further in their curricular areas because of the un-interrupted four day week. The staff has all of their students in the classroom during this time. What we have found is there’s more student-teacher contact time in an un-interrupted four day week than an interrupted five

Board of Directors:  
Tom Mains, Chairman; John Jensen, Vice Chairman;  
Gary Hess, Holly Harvey and Jerry Roberts

day schedule. Because most of our students are involved in some sort of athletics or activities, they are not being pulled from classroom instruction in this system. There is virtually no lost time in any core subject area. Also, students are assigned work to be completed during the days they are not in school. Another benefit of the flexible schedule is we can make up any lost instructional time due to inclement weather.

Even with the flexible schedule, we are in compliance with the state requirement of 1,000 hours of instructional time. We will also be in compliance with next year's added 80 hours to 7-12 grades.

I think the most important thing to remember is why we are here as a school district. I believe it is to educate our students to be successful beyond secondary education and to create life-long learners. We are doing just that. We have a 100% graduation rate and a 0% dropout rate. Over 90% of our students go on to post-secondary education successfully. As a small school, statistics are not always our friend. It does not take much to skew numbers in small sized classrooms. We look at our students as a whole (i.e. where they start and where they finished). Because we are a very rural, agricultural area, the community, school board, staff, students and parents support the continuation of the 180 day waiver for the Bickleton School District. We also realize this waiver does not work for the majority of larger districts and thus encourage the State Board of Education to find a way that small schools, such as ours, can continue in a system that works.

If there is anything else you need, please feel free to call me at anytime. 509-896-5473. I look forward to discussing this in greater detail. Thanks for all your time and effort.

Sincerely,

*Ric Palmer*

Ric Palmer  
Superintendent  
Bickleton Schools

## **Attachment F: Publications Cited**

Anderson, D. Mark and Walker, Mary Beth. "Does Shortening of the School Week Impact Student Performance? Evidence from the Four-Day School Week." Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. Research Paper 12-06. February 2012.

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