

THHS 4-DAY SCHOOL WEEK COMMUNITY MEETING
FEBRUARY 24, 2015 6:30 P.M.
THHS CHOIR ROOM

30 people in attendance – see sign in sheet

Comments and Questions from audience members in BOLD.

LSSD graduation rates increased 2013/2014 school year. What do you think the reason is?

With the ALC program, we are able to bring students back in – and they are able to graduate.

Explained how the graduation rates are calculated – and how the District worked to track down students who had left our district.

Tell me about advancement placement courses on Friday....

College classes that we offer have used Fridays to go to the college. Friday can also be used as an online program. Classes can be hard to work into schedules, but it is great to use Fridays for this.

One student from WKHS graduated with a high school diploma and an AA degree on the same day!

“E Day” -- Fridays can be used for an electronic day; Classes online.

If we are not approved for a 4-day week, what is the contingency plan; need to compensate \$167,000.

The School Board did approve a levy which will help. The Board will be looking at the budget.

What other Districts are on a 4-day week? There are 11 districts operating on a 4-day school week. Including Blackduck, Warroad, McCray to name a few. In southern Minnesota, a lot of districts operate on a FLY – Flexible Learning Year; starting August 15 and ending at the end of May.

High school athletics - how is time compensated? Athletic Directors work on scheduling games so the least amount of time is missed. We do flip days – where the daily schedule is completely flipped so you are not always missing the last period of the day.

We love the 4-day but what if we lose this? Would there be a later start time? Would love to have the same ending time to the day and start later. Child care can be an issue with later start times. It is harder on students who participate in athletics; not getting home until late. For parents that work, late starts do not matter; students are still up and at child care in the morning. This would need to be discussed.

I understand this is an annual application, do we feel satisfied with the process? Are there any changes? We are being more detailed. The application is asking for the same information as other years. This application is for 3 years.

I have 2 students involved in sports. The teachers have been super good. Students have been able to come in on Fridays to make up tests.

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This is a good thing! Sleeper overs with friends and families have increased, play dates increased. All good for our youth!

In regards to transportation and the miles that we put on our busses, how do we maintain our busses? We have a mechanic on staff to work on our busses. We also switch routes with our busses to keep mileage equal between all. We recently purchased 3 more busses.

Snow days last year: Fridays were very handy to have. We were able to make up days on Fridays without adding to our school calendar at the end of the year.

What is the process for the applications? The application is due on April 15th. Turn around has been in May. Sounds like the answer may come sooner this year.

What is happening at the legislative level? There is a lot of discussion at the legislative level with the House and Senate.

1. Districts on the Flexible Learning Years to take out the Commissioner and give it local control; to each local school board.

2. Grandfather in the 11 districts – they would be able to stay on a Flexible Learning Year until 2020 and then do an evaluation.

The vote on these would probably happen sometime in May.

A document was read from an audience member; document attached.

We are still in deficit spending. We would be more on a 5 day week. We need a plan. How many years have we had a deficit in spending? We have been deficit spending for 3 years.

We can't balance the budget on the teachers' backs. Moral is important, teachers need raises like everyone else.

Member Moe: When the board approved the levy we were told we had to go back to a 5 day week. Now we are told we can apply for a 4-Day week again. It has put the Board in a bad situation that the levy was approved and now we are applying for a 4 day week.

*** What does the budget look like with the levy and staying on a 4-day week?**

The budget for next year with a 4 day school week with the new levy would look to be balanced with no deficit spending. If we can continue to work under a 4 day week going forward we will be able to invest future levy dollars into updating our curriculum, technology and bus fleet.

*What is the per student cost compared to other districts?

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Per student spending General Fund FY13-14

Cook Cty	\$ 14,688.97
Chisholm	\$ 13,519.03
St Louis Cty	\$ 13,099.09
Ely	\$ 12,224.41
Hibbing	\$ 12,301.87
Virginia	\$ 11,716.21
Carlton	\$ 11,237.22
Lake Superior	\$ 10,929.75
Cloquet	\$ 10,843.58
Moose Lake	\$ 10,701.23
Grand Rapids	\$ 10,571.91
Proctor	\$ 9,691.12
Barnum	\$ 9,517.05

Is there discussion on the Math scores – what are we doing to raise the scores? Our staff is really talking. We are mapping curriculum, finding our needs. We know we have more work to do. Our students are learning. These test scores are based on one day. Home issues, tiredness, all play into test results. The math department is working on a “best practice” looking at scores and problems.

Get kids to talk to kids! Help others

Students that do well – do well. No matter where they are. Communicate with teachers. Be involved in their education.

We have a new teacher evaluation process. Guided math study. Problem solve with other kids.

How are we compared to other 4 day week districts regarding test scores? 3 districts are above us, 3 districts are below us. Blackduck School District has 3 hours of math, 2 hours of reading. They teach the test.

My daughter is getting a well-rounded education here at LSSD.

Numbers do not tell the whole story. WKES was a celebration eligible school, Minnehaha was a celebration school. We have a lot to celebrate within our schools.

Put money into curriculum.

Scheduled snow make-up days would be great.

Debbie Peterson 2/24/15