



Expand learning time

Introduction

The reality of what it takes to make sure all students are college ready and career ready is bumping up against the rigid time constraints of the traditional American school calendar. On average students in the United States attend school for six-and-a-half-hours per day, 180 days per year. This is considerably less time than their counterparts in other countries, which continue to outperform students in the United States. The solution: expand learning time in our country. Expanded learning time lengthens the school day, week or year for all students by at least 300 hours. The key, however, is not just adding time but changing the way time is used so that students benefit. Through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA, federal policy can help scale up expanded time initiatives.

Recommendation #1

Create a competitive grant program for states and districts for expanding learning time

Creating a competitive demonstration program that provides funding for lengthening and redesigning the school calendar would support good practice and stimulate new approaches to school improvement. Funds should be targeted to states and districts that agree to expand time by at least 300 hours and redesign the schedule for all students in participating low-performing, high-poverty schools.

Rather than just adding time to the school calendar, schools carefully redesign the schedule, incorporating the extra time for:

- More in-depth and rigorous learning opportunities in core academic subjects such as reading, math, science, history, and civics
- More time for other subjects and enrichment activities such as music, arts, physical education, service-learning, and work-based opportunities for older students
- Increased opportunities for teachers to work together to review student achievement data, plan coursework, and improve their skills

In 2011, members of Congress reintroduced a bill that would authorize a competitive program for expanding learning time called the Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act. The TIME Act would help provide students with the opportunities that lead to a well-rounded education, preparing them for college and the workplace in a complex 21st century economy. The new bill is sponsored by Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Representatives Mike Honda (D-CA) and Donald Payne (D-NJ).

Recommendation #2

Amend Title IV Part B (21st Century Community Learning Centers) to allow funds to be used for expanding learning time

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program supports school-based academic and enrichment opportunities for students during nonschool hours, including after and before school, and summer programs. These programs can help address students' academic and nonacademic needs, but participation in these programs is voluntary—a significant drawback.¹ And often low-income and disadvantaged students who are most likely to benefit from such programs are less likely to participate.²

Expanded learning time schools, by contrast, ensure that all students in a school benefit from increased academic and enrichment opportunities by formally incorporating enrichment opportunities into the school schedule. Strengthened partnerships with traditional afterschool providers and other community organizations is a key purpose of the TIME Act.

What our recommendations are based on

- Transforming Schools to Meet the Needs of Students: Improving School Quality and Increasing Learning Time in ESEA
- Expanded Time, Enriching Experiences: Expanded Learning Time Schools and Community Organization Partnerships
- Union and District Partnerships to Expand Learning Time

1 Harvard Family Research Project, "What are Kids Getting into These Days? Demographic Differences in Youth Out-of-School Time Participation" (2006).

2 Ann Duffett and Jean Johnson, "All Work and No Play" (Washington, DC: Public Agenda, 2004).



CAP's Body of Work on ESEA Topics

Increasing Teacher and Principal Effectiveness

- [Advancing Teacher and Principal Effectiveness: Four Recommendations for Reforming the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)
- [Essential Elements of Teacher Policy in ESEA: Effectiveness, Fairness, and Evaluation](#)
- [Measuring What Matters: A Stronger Accountability Model for Teacher Education](#)
- [So Long Lake Wobegon?: Using Teacher Evaluation to Raise Teacher Quality](#)
- [Treating Different Teachers Differently: How State Policy Should Act on Differences in Teacher Performance to Improve Teacher Effectiveness and Equity](#)
- [Increasing Principal Effectiveness: A Strategic Investment for ESEA](#)
- [Principals' Approaches to Developing Teacher Quality](#)

Closing the Comparability Loophole

- [Walking the Talk: Closing the Comparability Requirement Loophole in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)
- [Comparable, Schmocomparable: Evidence of Inequity in the Allocation of Funds for Teacher Salary Within California's Public School Districts](#)
- [Pulling Back the Curtain: Promoting Fiscal Equity and Providing All Students with Access to Effective Teachers Will Not Require Forcible Re-assignment](#)

Simplifying the Title I Formula

- [Bitter Pill, Better Formula: Toward a Single, Fair, and Equitable Formula for ESEA Title I, Part A](#)
- [Spoonful of Sugar: An Equity Fund to Facilitate a Single, Fair, and Equitable Formula for ESEA Title I, Part A](#)
- [Secret Recipes Revealed: Demystifying the Title I, Part A Formulas](#)

Extending Learning Time

- [Transforming Schools to Meet the Needs of Students: Improving School Quality and Increasing Learning Time in ESEA](#)
- [Expanded Time, Enriching Experiences: Expanded Learning Time Schools and Community Organization Partnerships](#)
- [Union and District Partnerships to Expand Learning Time](#)

Innovation

- [Leaders and Laggards: A State-by-State Report Card on Educational Innovation](#)
 - [Advancing Teacher and Principal Effectiveness: Four Recommendations for Reforming the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)
 - [Walking the Talk: Closing the Comparability Requirement in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)
 - [Fast Track to College: Increasing Post-secondary Success for All Students](#)
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Turning Around Low-Performing Schools

- [Incentivizing School Turnaround: A Proposal for Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#)
- [Turning Around the Nation's Lowest-Performing Schools](#)
- [Levers for Change: Pathways for State-to-District Assistance in Underperforming School Districts](#)

Providing Wraparound Services

- [Maximizing the Promise of Community Schools: Streamlining Wraparound Services for ESEA](#)
- [Breaking the Mold: Combining Community Schools with Expanded Learning Time to Help Educationally Disadvantaged Students](#)
- [Promise Neighborhoods Shows Real Potential but Needs the Right Funding](#)
- [A Look at Community Schools](#)