

# Longer school days

[Education](#), [School](#)



American today tends to believe that our educational system is working. I truly believe for this generation of students to remain competitive with their international peers as adults, they need to start spending more time in school. I am an advocate for longer school days. In fact at 180 days of school, American children spend the least amount time in the classroom when compared to other countries. Sure there are some undeniable hurdles, but overall the core idea is simple that children need enough time to learn, to build the skills, develop the knowledge and well-roundedness required to work and thrive in the twenty-first century.

Nothing considered by itself is enough to turn schools around not the most gifted teachers, most inspiring principals, newest buildings, or most up-to-date equipment. Time, on the other hand, is an imperative groundwork for new levels of student achievement and educational success. Like any precious resource, it can be wasted. Simply tacking extra time poorly spent onto the current school schedule, does not get the job done. An article from CNN. om reports that the public charter schools that belong to the well-known Knowledge Is Power Program or KIPP serving fourteen thousand overwhelmingly low-income (80 percent) African American and Latino (90 percent) students in seventeen states with concentrations in Houston, Texas decided to eliminate the lack of time as an excuse for failure. KIPP day at 7:30 a. m. and ending it at 5 p. m. , with Saturday school twice a month and at least three weeks of mandatory summer school.

By every measure national, statewide, and local KIPP students not only improve themselves, they also outperform the great majority of their peers. 90 percent of KIPP Houston High School tenth graders passed the Texas

statewide math exam, as compared to 49 percent of other Houston tenth graders. Nearly four-fifths of students who complete KIPP's eighth grade (the network consists mostly of middle schools) have entered college; nationally, the proportion for low-income students is less than one in five. Although I grant that longer school days do have some undeniable hurdles.

For instance, loss of personal time could mean that spending more time at school would cut into the amount of time students are able to spend at home. Teacher burnout could contribute from adding hours to the school day only compound a teacher's already busy schedule. Longer school days would require more time from students and teachers, but it would not guarantee results. The budget comes in to play when keeping facilities open and requiring staff and faculty to put in longer days will cost more money.

I still maintain that longer school day positive outcomes will outweigh the hurdles. My conclusion is that schools will be able to restore academic subjects that had been scaled back or even dropped due to the emphasis on core instruction and high-stakes testing in reading, writing, and math. Students are able to study crucial academic subjects such as science, history, social studies, and foreign languages. Teachers including myself will have the time to work with each other in planning how they teach their students, time that almost never exists in the current school schedule.