

Friday Enrichment / 4-Day Week...Building Success! October 2014

Over the past three years, Friday Enrichment and other Friday opportunities for students and parents of the Salida R-32-J School District have continued to grow. After getting input from students, administrators, teachers, and all staff, the 4-day week has definitely had a positive impact for our community overall. Robin NeJame, Friday Enrichment Outreach Coordinator, has worked tirelessly to promote enrichment opportunities for students, and she continues to work with community members to keep various options open for our students. She could not do this of course, without the generous contributions of High Country Bank and the City of Salida. The following are key points that have made this a positive transition. In fact, it's not a transition anymore, it's the way we do business.

- Friday School – 8-10:00 a.m. every Friday at Salida High School. This includes 2 certified teachers and 2 National Honor Society volunteers. Students are provided opportunities to make up missing work, they get help from teachers, and access computers. NHS students also provide tutoring.
- CMC classes are offered on Fridays. This is an important option for HS students to participate in concurrent enrollment classes with CMC.
- Numerous Friday Athletic and Activity trips do not interfere with school.
- Parents can schedule appointments on Fridays so students do not miss school. This has become a “culture” with many students.
- Staff also schedule appointments on Fridays.
- We have dropped the number of substitute teachers, as most teachers are able to do appointments, etc. on Fridays.
- Student and Staff morale has definitely improved – rarely are there any negative comments about the 4-day week.
- Salida Middle School also offers Friday School, similar to the high school. Students have a chance to get caught up. SMS averages 18-20 students per session.
- The SMS Yearbook and other groups meet on Fridays, so school time is not interfered with, and so students do not have to meet after school.
- Many administrative meetings are held on Fridays, allowing more time on Monday-Thursday for principals to focus on what's going on in the classrooms and at school.
- Professional Development and Training sessions occur on Fridays.
- Students attending the Salida Early Childhood Center have always had school Monday-Thursday. This allows the SECC Staff to have professional development on Fridays also.
- Facility Use – having no school on Fridays has opened up more opportunities for community use on Fridays.
- SHS has journalism work days on Fridays.
- Many SHS students are allowed to work on Fridays.
- Students can finish college classes, do coop work, job shadowing, and apprenticeships on Fridays.
- Much of our sports schedules are on Fridays and Saturdays. Again, students that leave on these trips do not need to miss school, which was always an issue on a 5-day week.
- Students and staff also have an extra day every week to mountain bike, hunt, fish, Zumba, hike and maintain active lifestyles on Fridays, adding to healthy lifestyles.
- Custodians can do deep cleaning and other special projects on Fridays.
- During the construction of both new schools, much finish work and warranty work has been able to be completed on Fridays.
- Many staff that need extra income, can also work on Fridays.

In addition, Salida School District has continued to excel in academics. For the second straight year we are a District of Distinction and we can make a statement that moving to a 4-day week has not hindered our student achievement – in fact – it seems to have made it better! Our students and staff have adjusted, and adjusted well. There is intense instruction and learning going on Monday - Thursday and we will continue to focus on student achievement at all levels. Students and staff feel recharged every week after a 3-day weekend. Though this is how Salida R-32-J does business now, the administration and the School Board will continue to assess and monitor the four-day week, to ensure that it is always the best way to do business.

Submitted by Darryl Webb, Superintendent of Salida R-32-J School District