



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: September 11, 2019
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads
Route To: Principals, Teachers, School Staff
From: Abdulsaleem Hasan, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Field Services

Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal Policies

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9*, New Jersey schools must be in session for 180 days to receive state aid. A day when school is in session is "a day on which the school is open, and students are under the guidance and direction of a teacher or teachers engaged in the teaching process." (*N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(a)*). Days in which schools are closed – including for inclement weather, teachers' institutes, or holidays – do not count as a day in session (*Ibid*).

In lieu of closing, schools may sometimes have a shortened school day with a delayed opening or early dismissal. A shortened day, whether it is planned or emergent (as in the case of inclement weather), must meet certain requirements in order to count toward the 180-day requirement.

The NJDOE advises districts to consider the following when creating policies regarding early dismissals or delayed openings:

Hour Requirements

- When inclement weather or another reason necessitates a shortened school day, it is considered the equivalent of a full day only if school is in session for four or more hours, excluding lunch and recess. (*N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(e)*)
- The policy should detail the starting time and ending time that will define the day for each school, in the event of a shortened day.
- In preschool and kindergarten, one continuous session of two and one-half hours qualifies as a full day. (*N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(b)*); New Jersey Department of Education: School Register, 2018-2019.
- Districts are encouraged to adjust the schedule so that both the AM and PM sessions of half - day kindergarten or preschool can reach a full two and one-half hours.

Kindergarten and Pre-School Class Size Requirements: Reminder in the Event Classes are Combined

- Kindergarten classes should not exceed a maximum enrollment of 25 students (*N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(c)(3)*);
- Kindergarten classes in former Abbott districts may not exceed 21 students (*N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(c)(3)*);
- Preschool classes, in former Abbott districts and any district that has received Preschool Education Expansion Aid (PEEA), may not exceed 15 students (*N.J.A.C. 6A:13A:4.3(a)*);
- Districts that received Early Childhood Program Aid may not have class sizes exceed 18 students (*N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-3 [(b)](c)5-i*);
- Former Early Launch to Learning Initiative districts may not have class sizes exceed 20 students (*N.J.A.C. 6A:13A:4.3(a)*; *IU 13A:3.2(c)(5)(i)*).

Contact information

Districts wanting to discuss their policies can reach out to their NJDOE [County Office of Education](#).

c: Members, State Board of Education
Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., Commissioner
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group