

cont. pg. 2

Universal Pre-kindergarten

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each child with an early childhood education. In 2014, New York City expanded their universal pre-kindergarten (Akaba, et al. 1). It “resulted in significant shifts in program delivery and instructional practices to which teachers had to adapt” (Akaba, et al. 1). Teachers had to create lesson plans to adjust to more classes, students, and work more hours. But parents are also worried that teachers for universal pre-kindergarten will not be experienced enough for the position. They are worried that they are not prepared enough for more classes and do not have the classifications for the position.

While this change could involve a lot of adapting for teachers, it brings benefits as well. One of the hardest challenges is providing the caregivers/teachers with adequate pay (Lieberman). The Washington D.C. “legislation also mandates that additional subsidy dollars are dedicated to increasing the salaries of child care workers so that they are compensated at the same level as preschool and kindergarten teachers” (Cusick, et al.). Putting extra money towards our teachers ensures that they will be taken care of, and their voice will be heard during this momen-

tous change. Currently, teachers employed with a publicly funded school receive a higher pay than those in other settings such as, schools that require tuition (Lieberman).

As for the quality of teachers, the higher wage ensures that our children will be enrolled in a “high-quality program” (Lieberman). A higher wage tends to bring teachers with higher degrees and more experience in the position. The states that have already begun expanding their universal pre-kindergarten have set guidelines for teachers. Many states, such as Oklahoma, have raised their requirements for pre-kindergarten teachers to ensure that the children are in a high-quality program (McWalters). States want their teachers to have higher college degrees as well as more experience (McWalters).

Reduce Financial Burden

According to the *Journal of Health Economics*, children enrolled in universal prekindergarten have a higher chance of experiencing problems with illnesses, hearing, and sight (Hong, et al.). Young children get sick easily when around other children. As for hearing and sight, when children are in an environment

with loud noises it can cause problems with their hearing (Hong, et al.). If children scratch their eyes or have been looking into bright lights, it could affect their eyesight (Hong, et al.). Due to this effect, the families will have to endure more expenses when involving medication and doctoral appointments. Along with more expenses, this could affect the children’s learning abilities.

However, children, even teenagers, are exposed to illness. Many come home with the flu or a simple cold because a friend had it. The possibility of getting sick has always been a concern, but that is not something students can avoid, even outside of school. As stated above, some worry about the expenses of medications and doctors’ appointments for illness, asthma, hearing, and sight. But, due to families not having to worry about the expense of prekindergarten, they will become more financially comfortable, then which overall relieves the worry of not affording bills that involve the payment for glasses, inhalers, and more.

Many children who are not yet old enough to enroll in kindergarten miss an important educational opportunity in pre-kindergarten due to the cost. The

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Herald

By Joshua Jones, English professor

On hands and knees, trowel poised
Above the heart of my backyard
Patch of dirt, I despair.
I’m half through
Planting these futile heirloom
Seeds shipped from California
That promise me tomatoes red
And sweet as a Halloween punch,
Ten-pound heads of lettuce,
And a bundle of candy-colored
Carrots. How could I be so weak
To believe some west-coast wizard
Hippy could make vegetables
Impersonate the variegated fantasy
Of the sweets aisle? And why not let
The green things be themselves for
once?

I look back at the regular mounds
And furrows I’ve left behind me—
Orderly and weed-free for the first
Time in years—and try to hope
for a minute that even if they won’t
discombobulate my taste buds, at
least
they’ll taste good enough that I might
regret
letting a few of each variety go to
seed.

A note from the author:
I’m a relatively new professor here at Grayson, and my background is creative writing. Sometimes students don’t really believe me, so a group of my composition students challenged me to write a poem with four words of their choosing in under an hour. The words were “Halloween,” “red,” “lettuce,” and “discombobulate.” I named the poem “Herald” because it uses the first letters of those four words.

If you’re interested in writing, I will be teaching an Intro to Creative Writing course in the fall semester. I’m also one of the advisors for Sigma Kappa Delta/Writers Unlimited. We meet and talk all things books and writing. We’d love to have you!

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How many suns can you find throughout this paper?

There should be 3 total. See if you can find them all!



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Editorial: Firearms in Classrooms: Is This a Logical Idea?

By Shelby Mendez, student

While danger loomed outside her classroom door, Abbey Clements, a teacher who survived the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre, had to sing “Christmas carols to her terrified children to distract them” from the crazed gunman that roamed the school’s hallways (Ujifusa and Blad). As the number of school shootings across the nation continues to rise, Texas legislators have decided to fight guns with guns. Texas allows teachers to carry firearms in schools through two programs, the first being the School Marshal Program, which “requires a psychological exam, weapon proficiency to fire 700 rounds of ammunition, and 80 hours of training in use of force and active shooter response. A 16-hour renewal course is [also] required every two years” (Burnett). The Marshal Program is “essentially” designed to prepare teachers and staff to become peace officers (Schildkraut 59). The other program has fewer specifications. The Guardian Program “only requires 16 hours of training,” but each school district has the option to add further requirements (Schildkraut 59; Vandergriff). Corrie Evans, a former teacher at Ector Independent School District, says that Ector implemented the Guardian Plan. At Ector, “all armed teachers were required to attend a two-day training with a trained team of law enforcement... and had to retrain every six weeks to refresh on gun safety and firing accuracy” (Evans).

Flawed and Dangerous Programs

While both these programs are designed to “not leave... children unprotected and defenseless in their schools,” the risks associated with firearms being in classrooms cannot go unnoticed (Lott). Teachers may harm innocent bystanders in pressured situations and can be in possession of a firearm during an accidental discharge. Furthermore, the feelings of students and teachers who oppose arming teachers cannot be ignored. With all these factors tak-

en into consideration, Texas should not arm K-12 teachers. Those who support arming K-12 teachers with firearms believe that educators will be able to quickly respond and disengage crisis situations. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton is in favor of arming teachers and believes that a fast response time could “prevent more mass atrocities at schools in the future” (Kampmark 37; Nittle and Rummler). Evans, who is now a business teacher and coach at Leonard High School, agrees with Paxton. Evans says, “The average school shooting lasts less than 5 minutes, but there have been many casualties within this timeframe” due to the response time of school resource officers or police. Harrold Independent School District, a small school system located on the Texas/Oklahoma border, has armed staff members on campus. Cody Patton, the superintendent of Harrold ISD, is a firm believer in providing his students with firearm protection because “the nearest sheriff’s deputy is 20 minutes away.” So, Patton says it is his “responsibility” to get his students safely home to their parents (Burnett). But if K-12 teachers were armed, they would have to leave their students and put themselves in danger during crises. Since armed teachers would have to respond to active shooter situations, “it [would] increase the likelihood that police will injure or kill” a teacher by mistake. For example, a plainclothes Maryland police officer was accidentally shot and killed when he “reported to an active shooter situation in progress to provide backup” (Schildkraut 59). Therefore, Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association, believes that “bringing more guns into schools [would] make schools more dangerous” (Kampmark 37). Additionally, armed teachers who respond to a crisis can interfere with police and emergency medical services. In the case of a school shooting, “responding law-enforcement officers would have to spend

additional time” determining who the shooter is. As a result, this “confusion can delay” paramedics from being cleared to enter the building “to treat the injured” (Schildkraut 59). So arming teachers will hinder the response time of first responders.

Affordable and Safer Alternatives

Proponents of arming teachers will also agree that firearms are cheaper than campus police officers and metal detectors. Harrold ISD, which consists of 27 employees and about 125 K-12 students, “can’t really afford to pay for... security officers” (Burnett). Likewise, Ector ISD does not have a student resource officer on campus due to district size and available funds (Evans). The Lee County Independent School District located in Virginia also agrees that arming teachers is “a fiscally sound plan” (“School” 7). But the federal government has established grant programs to help school districts protect their students without the use of firearms. The Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants “is a \$1.1 billion [annual] program for districts to spend on student wellness and health.... and it can also be used to cover costs related to student safety.” Furthermore, “shortly after the Parkland shooting” in 2018, “Congress approved a \$700 million increase for Title IV grants” to help districts fund “additional mental counseling [services], crisis training [sessions], and to prevent violence in schools” (Ujifusa and Blad). In October 2022, the Department of Justice also announced that the Department’s Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) would be awarding school districts with “nearly \$190 million” in grants to “support school safety.” In terms of preventing school violence, the grants will fund “anti-bullying [and mental health crisis] training,” as well as establish “reporting systems” like emergency hotlines. The grants can also be used to cover the

expenses of “metal detectors and locks” to enhance school security (“Department”).

Uneasiness in Classrooms

Arming teachers will negatively affect the learning environment. When students are under the “impression” that they are “potential sources or targets of violence,” the overall mood of a classroom shifts. With a gun in the classroom, students may experience feelings of fear, resentment, or even aggression (Minshaw 131). Ade Osadolor-Hernandez, a national advisory board member for Students Demand Action, believes that arming teachers will also give students anxiety (Nittle and Rummler). As a result, these feelings can negatively impact “student-teacher relationships” (Schildkraut 58).

Hesitancy to Shoot

Most teachers are also uncomfortable with being armed. Pre-K teacher Michelle Cardenas says she “would quit teaching” if she had to “start carrying a concealed

handgun in class.” But Cardenas is not alone. In a survey conducted by the Texas American Federation of Teachers in June 2022, “77 percent of respondents said they do not want to have a gun” (Burnett). In fact, teachers across the country have spoken out against being armed through the #ARMMEWITH Instagram and Twitter movement (Minshaw 131). Furthermore, Lauren Willner, assistant professor in the School of Social Work at the College of Health and Human Services at San Diego State University, found high levels of Mendez 5 discomfort associated with firearms when she conducted research in 2018. After surveying 2,926 educators from across the United States, Willner “found that only 6 percent said they were comfortable firing a weapon to stop a potential shooter” (Nittle and Rummler). Russ Ramsey, a coach, agriculture instructor, and school marshal at Harrold ISD, has witnessed teachers being uncomfortable firing a weapon firsthand. During his

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Universal Pre-kindergarten

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cost of tuition (yearly) to enroll a child in pre-kindergarten ranges from \$2,000 to \$146,000 (“Prekindergarten”). According to the Center for American Progress, “Since private tuition for high-quality, full-day preschool can cost many thousands of dollars per year, free public preschool has the potential to significantly increase take-home pay for parents” (Cusick, et al.). Parents can work more hours and bring home a higher income but still provide their children with the chance to attend pre-kindergarten.

Increase Labor Force

Along with providing more economic relief for families, the labor force rate has increased in Washington, D.C. (Cusick, et al.). Dawn Stone was a stay-at-home mom with four children. Stone’s husband was their only source of income and was constantly out of town due to work. Stone stated, “Every time I started a new job, I wasn’t able to stay long due to my kids needing me at home.” Due to not having the expense of pre-kindergarten or daycare, parents can go back to their regular jobs. According to the Center for American Progress, over the last 14 years “the city’s [Washington, D.C.] maternal labor force participation rate has increased by about 12 percentage points, with 10 percentage points attributable to preschool expansion” (Cusick, et al.). Overall, a higher labor force will affect our country’s economy. Our country will have a lower unemployment rate, and it will experience economic growth.

Academic Success

By providing univer-

sal pre-kindergarten it has shown higher rates of high school graduates and college acceptances (Rosalsky). It also helps children with their social skills and exercise. The Head Start Impact Study and the Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K Study taken in Tulsa, Oklahoma showed that those who attended universal pre-kindergarten had fewer absences during their high school career (Amadon, et al. 2). During a study by the National Bureau of Economic Research they chose random children to be enrolled in a funded preschool (Rosalsky). Those who attended the funded preschool “ended up having a high-school graduation rate of 70% — six percentage points higher than the kids who were denied preschool, who saw a graduation rate of only 64%” (Rosalsky).

Physical and Mental Engagement

Children need to gain social skills. Constantly being around adults does not fully prepare them for children their age. They need to interact with children their age. Universal prekindergarten gives them the chance to do that. Some parents have multiple children at home, making it difficult to make sure they all participate in physical activities. By children being enrolled in pre-kindergarten, it gives them a chance to participate in physical activities every day. It has been proved that physical activity “promotes joyful and engaged learning” (Golloher, et al. 20). Caitlin Wolfe has worked as a lead teacher at The Goddard School for two years. The Goddard School is a preschool located in McKinney, Texas. Wolfe mentioned she has seen

many children start school who would not interact with many of the other students. She stated, “It took a few months for some children to begin engaging with the other students.” It is especially important that children start engaging early in their childhood to improve their social skills. Early mental and physical engagement will help children continue to be engaged in later years of their education. They will also obtain better social skills during their early childhood time. Overall universal pre-kindergarten can benefit families, teachers, children, and our economy. It will provide parents with more financial stability, along with time to continue working. Pre-kindergarten teachers have the possibility of higher pay. Children have the chance to gain better social skills and have a higher chance of completing high school and college. Finally, due to families being able to work more our economy will experience economic growth. Universal pre-kindergarten is a step in the right direction to help our future generations.

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Letter from the editor

I’m sure that everyone has finals coming around the corner, and just like me, you might be experiencing that influx of anxiety. If this is you, know that you’re not alone and you will get through this. As I have mentioned in my past papers, there are resources that are free to Grayson College students. From the math lab, personal tutoring and the writing lab, there are solutions for everyone.

It can be difficult to focus on what is left to be done this semester with summer right around the corner. I am currently 19 weeks pregnant, and by the time this semester ends, I will be 21 weeks pregnant. That means I will be a little over half way through my pregnancy with my baby girl. I’m having her in September, so I’m not going to be attending the college next semester.

Instead I will be working towards studying for the Hessi exam.

The Hessi is an exam for future nursing students and I have heard that it can be difficult.

I also plan to go visit my husband’s family in Mexico over the summer. If you’ve never tried authentic Mexican food, it is amazing. It tastes a hundred times better coming directly from Mexico. There are some restrictions on what pregnant women can eat, since they don’t have a way to pasturize their food; however, it is still incredibly delicious!

What are your plans for the summer? I hope that you are able to find time to rest up for the next semester. If you have anything you’d like to share with *The Viking* that happens over the summer, please be sure to send it to me! You can do so by reaching out to me at prkpetri@vikings.grayson.edu.

Happy summer, everyone!



My 19-week pregnant baby bump! one more week and I will be half way through the pregnancy with just 20 more weeks left (4.5 months).

Editorial: Four Versus Five Days to

by Caroline Dossman, student

Four-day school weeks have been a growing trend throughout the United States for the past several decades, and in 2016, the first Texas school district, Olfen ISD, switched to a shortened week (Mekelburg).

Since then, dozens of Texas schools have transitioned to a four-day instructional week. When looking at a four-

day versus a traditional school week, policymakers and educators alike should support the option that prioritizes student success, promotes community safety, and works to benefit society. When looking to make determinations about a four-day school week, one needs to compile a variety of information to demonstrate the potential efficacy

of a shorter school week. In analyzing school systems, each community has unique characteristics such as population density, total population, income, housing, racial demographics, and revenue generated by the school district.

In lower-income sectors, support for a four-day school week is much lower and those families are like-

Maximize Educational Success :Not So Fast

ly to have legitimate concerns that are not heard (Turner, et al. 2). Attending school provides students with opportunities for physical activity, access to mental health services, and meal programs that support students throughout the week (Thompson 65).

In addition, by extending the school day and year to compen-

sate for a lost day of instruction, the staff and students’ performance, attention, and happiness may suffer.

While these are important points that exemplify the problems associated with a four-day school week, this paper will focus on the economic and academic implications of a four-day week.

In looking at a compilation

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Firearms in Classrooms

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firearm training, Ramsey says that other teachers “folded” after seeing “a cardboard cut-out of a bad guy” holding a student at gunpoint. As a result, these teachers “could not pull the trigger on the ‘bad guy’ because they were not physically or mentally ready” to discharge a weapon. Therefore, Ramsey says that “it takes a special type of teacher” to be armed in a school setting (Burnett).

Potential for Disaster

In high-pressure situations, teachers may accidentally harm or kill innocent bystanders. According to Clements, shootings are “chaotic and confusing,” so it is “unrealistic” for individuals to believe that “educators can go from classroom teacher to expert marksman in seconds” (Ujifusa and Blad; Vandergriff). Furthermore, stress can make it even “more difficult”

to successfully aim and hit a target (Schildkraut 58).

In 2012, New York law enforcement “wounded nine bystanders” before they were able to disengage the shooter at the Empire State Building.

So, if highly trained police officers “cannot hit their targets (and only their targets),” how can a teacher stop a school shooter without harming bystanders in the process (Schildkraut 58)? Therefore, teachers should not be expected “to stop or prevent a mass shooting” with less training than police officers (Rogers, et al. 862).

Parental Opposition

Since teachers “are not trained to be armed security guards,” parents are also concerned as to whether educators could successfully stop a gunman without harming students.

Wendy Gonzales-Ne-

al, head of the Texas chapter of the National Parents Union, believes that students are put in more danger when teachers are in possession of firearms (Nittle and Rummler).

Darren Mendez, Farmersville Independent School District bus driver and parent, agrees with Gonzales-Neal. Mendez says, “It’s hard for me to trust teachers to protect my children with guns. In my opinion, they have not undergone enough training to properly handle a weapon.”

Likely Mishaps

Firearms can also accidentally discharge while in a teacher’s possession. In 2018, a firearm accidentally discharged during a “safety demonstration,” and this mistake “resulted in a student injury” (Minshew 131). The individual in possession of the weapon was a “California educator and a reserve law enforcement of-

ficer” who had the “highest standard of training available to civilians” (Rogers, et al. 863). So, how can we ensure that these accidents will not happen in schools?

After evaluating the risks of arming teachers, it is evident that Texas needs to consider alternatives other than inserting firearms into classrooms. Guns can negatively alter studentteacher relationships, create unwanted emotions, and have a high potential of harming those in which they are supposed to protect. Instead, Texas needs to consider “firmer child access prevention laws or door locks” to protect students from active shooter situations (Schildkraut 59).

The Lone Star State can also “invest more in student health and anti-bullying measures” to help prevent these tragedies from happening. But as of right now, “the entire nation is failing to

keep children safe in schools” (Nittle and Rummler).

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Not so fast

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of data and statistics as well as parent testimony, the benefits and downfalls of a four-day school week become evident.

Although most children would be overjoyed at the opportunity to have a three-day weekend, severe consequences result from limiting traditional education to four days per week. For the student and family, a four-day school week is typically impractical and could be detrimental to an individual’s success.

Daytime Care Concerns

The most common concern voiced by parents regarding a four-day school district centers around childcare for the day off. When schools are open only four days per week, this schedule can create an issue for parents who are working five days a week. As a result, many parents turn to childcare centers as a solution; however, this “solution” is flawed. According to a 2019 study of multiple rural Missouri school districts by Jon Turner, Assistant Professor of Educational Administration at Missouri State University, et al., 25.6% of elementary school parents strug-

gled to find or afford childcare (11) and 12% of parents could not find childcare for their children (6). Additionally, affording an entire day of daycare can be costly for families and pose an undue financial burden. For instance, the YMCA, a popular daycare provider in Texas, charges \$45 for childcare for each “day off” from school for students in pre-kindergarten through seventh grade (“Anna ISD”). At this rate, a family may pay up to \$1800 for just one child each school year, which can be unrealistic for some families and pose a barrier for parents trying to provide consistent care for their children. According to Emily Morton of the Educational Researcher, when transitioning to a four-day-school-week, there was a notable 11% decrease in employment for married mothers who had children aged 5-13 (13). As Paul Lewis*, parent of two high school students, says, “If our school district switched to a four-day school week, we would have to leave the district. We cannot accommodate our work schedules to make sure [that] our children are taken care of, and I would be worried about my kids at home

alone.” Parents should not have to choose between their job and their child’s safety, and in school districts with a four-day week, many parents must make that difficult decision. Even with daycare being an option for younger students, few solutions are available for students in upper middle school or high school, leaving these children unattended at home, possibly without meals, free to get into trouble, and without aid in scary scenarios such as a fire or home invasion. A lack of adult guidance or supervision has proved detrimental in some areas of the U.S. where there have been substantial increases in property crime and theft among juveniles (Morton 32). Nationwide, several school districts have returned to a five-day schedule from a four-day week due to concerns about students who were being left at home alone (Lopez).

Negative Impact to Academic Performance

Additionally, findings support that academic achievement is burdened by a four-day school week as total weekly instructional time is decreased by three to four hours (Morton 31). In a 2021

Behind the scenes with Susan Mitchell

By Viking Staff

“One of the many things I get out of my job is a good workout and facing the day with thankfulness and gratitude,” reflects Grayson College Maintenance Custodian Susan Mitchell.

Hired in 2003, Mitchell worked as a custodian for several years before being hired into the bookstore as a shipping and receiving clerk, a position she held for nine years. During her tenure as a clerk, she watched the new bookstore and cafeteria being built in 2008.

Following her bookstore position, Mitchell was hired into the Maintenance department, assigned to the Career Tech building, where she maintains the Cosmetology and Mechatronic and Machine Tooling labs. She also cleans the

Foundation House. She takes great pride in cleaning and preparing the classrooms for Grayson students and staff.

In October of this year, Mitchell will have worked 20 years for Grayson College. She plans to work a few more years and then retire. “I want to thank my supervisor, Robin Bridges, for his support and believing in me,” says Mitchell. “Grayson is a great place for a career!”

“I am married to a good man,” Mitchell reveals, with whom she will celebrate their 40th anniversary in May.

Thanks, Susan Mitchell for working behind the scenes to provide a clean learning environment for Grayson students and teachers!



Robin Bridges, Maintenance Custodial Supervisor, congratulating Maintenance Custodian Susan Mitchell for 15 years of service to Grayson College.

Not so fast

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study analyzing over 100 four-day-per-week schools in Oregon, 61% of students pass math testing and 68% of students pass reading testing. On the other hand, at five-day-per-week schools, 65% of students pass math testing and 71% of students pass reading testing (Thompson 63). While the change in pass rate, 4% and 6% respectively, may not initially seem significant, this difference could determine whether or not thousands of students pass their exams. In a 2021 study completed by the RAND Corporation, researchers found that “Several years after adopting a four-day schedule ... those districts saw slower rates of student progress...” (Sawchuk). Anna ISD recently transitioned to a four-day school week schedule. Dr. Gayle Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction at Anna ISD, says, “We are eliminating a lot of fluff from our instructional days, minimizing whole period tests, compacting our curriculum where we can...” Studies alternatively indicate that “compacting” lessons and “eliminating” non-essential work may be more detrimental to a student’s learning outcomes. Five-day school weeks provide a more consistent and reasonable pacing for curriculum, and with a four-day school week “it might seem like schools are trying to cram lessons” (Lopez). To combat these possible negative academic outcomes, many schools with a four-day school week also have remedial services on the day off. For instance, Dr. Smith notes, “We have also added Boot Camp days throughout the school year on some Fridays to help students who are at risk of failing STAAR/EOCs.” However, these remediation days are rare with over half of the four-day schools completely closed on the day off and only 30% of the open schools offering remedial services (Thompson 60). Additionally, in requiring students and staff to attend a fifth day of school, some of the potential benefits of four-day school week offers are null.

Economic Impact for the School and Homeowner

The most appealing benefit of the four-day school week is the supposed economic benefit as, in theory, operation costs will be reduced for the district when a day of school is eliminated (Morton 30). However, these cost savings are not as significant as one would anticipate. The most recent data from a 2011 Education Commission of the States report shows that actual school savings ranged from 0.4% to 2.5%, which are primarily composed of transportation and diesel-related cost-savings (Ferrarin). These small cost savings for the district are not worth the cost that an individual homeowner may incur. In urban areas, the four-day school week resulted in home evaluations decreasing by approximately four percent. As a result, families were forced to pay anywhere from \$700 to \$6000 more in property tax (Sparks). The cost-benefit of the four-day week seems to not justify increasing property tax for individuals.

Addressing the Teacher Shortage

Especially in rural communities, schools switch to a four-day school week as a result of the difficulties associated with “recruitment, retention, and training of high-quality teachers” (Turner, et al. 1). As stated by Dr. Smith, Anna ISD, a rural school district, loses teachers every year to larger school districts in the area due to “better pay and housing options elsewhere.” Concerns with finding teachers largely contributed to Anna ISD’s decision to shift school schedules. After announcing the move to a five-day school week, Anna ISD reports that they had 200 teachers attend their job fair of which many were veteran teachers (Smith). However, the four-day-week incentive is not effective in urban school districts where teachers were “unwilling to trade off the higher salaries offered by outside opportunities for the benefits [of a four day week]” (Sparks). For instance, at a large school district outside

of Denver, there was a 3% decrease in teacher retention after transitioning to a four-day week (Sparks). For many school districts, such as Mineral Wells ISD, the only reason they switched to a four-day week was to attract and retain teachers. In fact, Chico ISD superintendent, Randy Brawner, blatantly states, “If we weren’t facing a teacher shortage and the loss in enrollment, we would [have] definitely stayed in a five-day traditional calendar” (Lopez). Even so, the four-day school week is a band-aid fix for a much larger issue in education. Instead of working to develop incentives, the education system needs to work on reform and increasing funding. In most areas, the four-day school week proves detrimental to student success, and the shortened week delays the inevitable need for a movement toward qualitatively better education. While initially, the idea of a four-day week may be appealing, especially to schools facing teaching shortages, the substantial costs associated with the shorter week are not worthwhile. The benefits of a four-day school week are at the expense of a student’s ability to learn and their parent’s ability to support their child’s education. As stated by Baan Dek Montessori school, attending schools five days a week “provides the best consistency and routine for children which ... is fundamental to strong development at this early, formative age” (Snyder). Ultimately, students need consistency, structure, and a support system that encourages learning and growth, which is most effectively accomplished through a five-day school week.

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ESL students celebrate Mardi Gras at South Campus in February.

Career connection

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Denison, Texas

<https://grayson.edu/the-viking/index.html>

May 3, 2023

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UIL students enjoying some down time between events.



UIL students enjoying some down time between events



UIL Number Sense Runners Up!



Area students competed in the Scripps Spelling Bee in February to represent Grayson County at the Dallas Regional Spelling Bee in March. Judges were Joleen Yeager, Math Professor; Keri Harvey, Education Professor (not pictured); and Marlea Trevino, English Professor.

21st Annual CAREER CONNECTION



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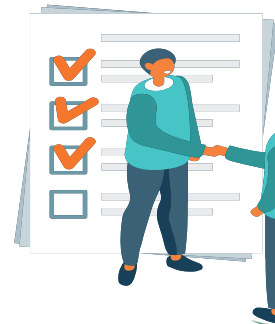
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