



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## **COMPARISON OF LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR AT SELECTED CHARTER SCHOOLS AND MAGNET SCHOOLS**

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You asked for a comparison of selected charter schools' and magnet schools' length of school days and school years. In making the comparison, you asked us to include union and non-unionized schools and indicate if teachers are required to be there for any extra days of school.

The six schools included in this report are Amistad Academy (K-12), New Haven; Jumoke Academy (PK-8), Hartford; New Beginnings Family Academy (K-8), Bridgeport; and Interdistrict School for the Arts and Communications (ISAAC) (6-8), New London (all charters); and Classical Magnet School (6-12), Hartford; and New Haven Academy (9-12), New Haven (both interdistrict magnet schools).

### **SUMMARY**

At the six schools we examined the length of school day varies with each school. As with any school, not all the hours of the school day are dedicated to student instructional time (non-instructional time includes lunch, recess, and other non-class time). The number of instructional hours ranged from 916 (New Haven Academy) to 1,230 (New Beginnings Family Academy) for the 2010-11 school year. Of the six schools all but one had either 182 or 183 instructional school days a year (these numbers do not count non-student days for teachers that are dedicated to professional development). New Beginnings Academy had the most days with 198.

Two schools offer additional schools days, one offers mandatory and the other voluntary days, in addition to the standard school year. New Beginnings, which is a K-8<sup>th</sup> grade school, has a summer “Boost Academy” that is mandatory for all of its students. Jumoke has a voluntary Saturday Academy for 12 Saturdays for students who need additional help. At both of these schools (New Beginnings is unionized and Jumoke is not) the teachers receive additional pay for any of these additional days they agree to work.

### NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS AND INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS

Table 1 below shows the number of school days, instructional time, and school start and end times for the six schools. Not all time between a school’s start time and end time is instructional time. Therefore the instructional hours for each school vary not just because of the length of time between the start and the end of the day. Activities such as lunch, recess, or enrichment programs do not count toward instructional time.

**Table 1: Number of School Days and Instructional Hours for Six Schools**

<i>School</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Type of Public School</i>	<i>2010-11 School Year</i>			
			<i>Days Per Year*</i>	<i>Instructional Hours Per Year**</i>	<i>Start Time</i>	<i>End Time</i>
Amistad Academy	New Haven	Charter	183	1,171	7:15 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
Jumoke Academy	Hartford	Charter	182	1,000	9:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.
New Beginnings Family Academy	Bridgeport	Charter (unionized)	198	1,230	8:00 a.m.	3:45 p.m.
Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications (ISAAC)	New London	Charter, (unionized)	183	1,046	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Classical Magnet School	Hartford	Interdistrict Magnet	182	964	7:45 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
New Haven Academy	New Haven	Interdistrict Magnet	182	916	8:00 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
*Does not include non-student days for professional development. State law requires at least 180 days.						
** State law requires at least 900 hours of instruction.						
Source: State of Connecticut Department of Education						

In the table, whether the charter schools are unionized is noted because as independent public schools, charter schools do not always have a unionized teacher workforce. All other public schools in Connecticut have unionized teacher workforces.

The school days are structured somewhat differently at each school. Some have enrichment programs at the end of the day (usually from about 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.) that are optional, essentially making it an after-school program, not instructional hours. Classical Magnet makes the enrichment mandatory for all students and it is considered part of the school day. But enrichment, which is often a student-selected activity of athletics, theater, art, dance, or other activity, is not considered instructional time even if it is mandatory. Considering enrichment and afterschool programs, some schools may have students at the school until as late as 6:00 p.m. or 6:15 p.m. Table 2. shows when after school activities, that are not required as part of the school day, are held.

**Table 2: After School Activities**

<i>School*</i>	<i>After School Activity</i>	<i>Hours</i>
Jumoke Academy	Enrichment activities including book club, track and field, choir, drum and drill team	3:30 p.m. -4:30 p.m.
New Beginnings Family Academy	Homework, lesson review, some enrichment activities	3:45 p.m.-6:15 p.m.
Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications (ISAAC)	After school program with various activities	3:15 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Classical Magnet School	Homework Club	4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

\*Information was not available from all six schools.

### **SCHOOLS WITH ADDITIONAL DAYS AND TEACHER COMPENSATION**

New Beginnings and Jumoke Academy each have school days that are in addition to the traditional calendar. This summer, New Beginnings’ mandatory Boost Academy will hold classes for 13 days in August from 7:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. (The exact number of days varies each year depending upon calendar considerations.) Principal Paul Whyte indicates the summer academy focuses on literacy and numeracy. In the past the mandatory summer school was held in July, but this year, because of the availability of July summer camps that many students want to attend, New Beginnings is moving the summer academy to August. Whyte says the time helps keep students learning over the summer so it is not as challenging to “get them to be students again” once classes begin again in the fall.

Teachers are paid to teach the summer academy separately in addition to their union contract. Whyte asks teachers to volunteer for the extra work and said almost all the teachers agree to. Occasionally he has a few new or retired teachers take part to cover all the summer classes.

At Jumoke Academy, the Saturday Academy is held for a total of 12 Saturdays, six in the fall and six in the winter, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. It is voluntary for students and focuses on math, reading, and writing. A certified teacher provides instruction in each area, for which they receive additional pay for their participation. According to Jumoke officials about one quarter of the school approximately 400 students participate in Saturday Academy. Teachers elect to participate in the Saturday Academy.

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