

FACT SHEET: SB 236

AUTHOR: SENATOR FRAN PAVLEY

MOORPARK USD MIDDLE COLLEGE PROGRAM FOUR DAY SCHOOL WEEK

As amended, April 1, 2013

THE PROBLEM

Students are taking longer to complete their college degrees. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, a highly respected academic national news journal, approximately 35% of college students complete their degrees in four years. While close to two-thirds of college students do eventually graduate, spending more time in school increases the costs for students over time.

As a response, students can be proactive in completing college requirements. Middle College programs allow students to take college-level coursework while still in high school. This gives high school students the opportunity to complete college coursework early, increasing the likelihood that they will graduate within a four-year window.

Middle College programs are very rigorous – many programs, such as the one operated by the Moorpark Unified School District, have students taking college courses during the morning, Friday or weekends and high school classes during the afternoon and evening. The traditional five-day school week currently required by California statute is not conducive to the advanced pacing of the Middle College program.

THE SOLUTION

SB 236 would authorize, but not require, the Moorpark Unified School District to operate its

Middle College Program on a four-day school week. Typically, four-day school weeks have been implemented as a form of budget control. However, allowing Moorpark USD to convert this one program to a four-day school week, would provide needed flexibility for an academically intense Middle College curriculum.

BACKGROUND

Currently, nine school districts have been statutorily authorized to run one or more of their schools on a four-day school week. These school districts are:

- Pacific Unified School District,
- Leggett Valley Unified School District,
- Alpaugh Unified School District,
- Potter Valley Community Unified School District,
- Borrego Springs Unified School District,
- Warner Unified School District
- Julian Union Elementary School District,
- Julian Union High School District, and
- the Reeds Creek Elementary School District

Additionally, schools that are converted to a four-day school week schedule must meet certain requirements such as consulting with the school community and meeting specified educational requirements.

FEDERAL LAW AND OTHER STATES

Currently, 21 other states have given authorization for school districts to operate on a four-day school week. The process in which this authorization is granted varies from state to state.

SUPPORT

Moorpark Unified School District (Sponsor)
Moorpark College