

Half-Day Sessions

24 P.S. §15-1504

DATE OF ISSUE: July 1, 2001

DATE OF REVIEW: July 1, 2009
July 1, 2005

PURPOSE

This Basic Education Circular (BEC) discusses the law and procedures for approval of half-day instructional sessions for school-age students.

Half-day Sessions

In order to provide the best education possible to students in this Commonwealth, public schools should provide full-day sessions of educational instruction. Half-day sessions, therefore, will not be approved except for cases of extreme need.

Please be reminded that overcrowding or interruption of an instructional year due to construction alone is not justifiable under Section 1504(b). Plans for construction/renovations must provide for the mandated minimum of 180 days of instruction and a minimum of 900 hours of instruction at the elementary level or 990 hours of instruction at the secondary level.

Procedures

The following general policies will be followed by the Department in making a decision to approve requests for half-day sessions:

1. Representative of a school district presented with an emergency situation must promptly contact the Department's School Services Unit (717-787-4860) to discuss the emergency and any proposed solutions.
2. Any request for half-day sessions requires submission of Application for Approval of Half-Day Sessions, [Form PDE-4016](#). The form must be completed in its entirety. Include documentation to substantiate statements concerning health and safety hazards.
3. Requests for half-day sessions are to include school calendar amendments considered.
4. Requests for half-day sessions must indicate whether any students are receiving special education services and how half-day sessions will affect the delivery of those services.
5. Each half-day session must be four (4) hours in duration. Include schedules for each half-day session. The half-day session may be reduced for first and second grades upon the request of the school district if the health, safety, or welfare of the children is impacted. However, the school program submitted by the district must show that the program is adequate for first and second grades. The request must include documentation to support statements concerning how the health, safety or welfare of the children is impacted.

6. Approval for half-day session may not exceed one year. Annual extensions may be granted upon application and review of the particular circumstances.
7. Attach documentation to support statements concerning Parts II and III of the form.

REFERENCES:

Purdon's Statutes

24 P.S. §15-1504(b)

ATTACHMENT:

[PDE-4016 - Application for Approval of Half-Day Sessions](#)

BUREAU/OFFICE CONTACT:

School Services Office
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street | Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717-787-4860 | Fax: 717-214-4389
RA-PDE-SchoolService@pa.gov