



Sixteen Early Release Thursdays for 2008-09

Below is Early Release information that has been on the district website. It has also been posted on school websites or linked to the information on the district site. The information has also been made available to the news media and published in various newsletters.

Please help spread the word so all parents, students and staff are informed. For more information, contact Christine Hedstrom, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, at hedstroc@elmbrookschoools.org. Thank you.

Listed below, for the advance planning purposes of families with children in the Elmbrook Schools, are the sixteen specific dates and the corresponding specific early release times that have been approved by the Board of Education as "Early Release Thursdays" for the 2008-09 academic year.

Building Schedules - Early Release Times

(Schools are dismissed 2-hours and 15-minutes early)

- Elementary Schools: Early Release Time 1:27 p.m.**
- Middle Schools: Early Release Time 12:15 p.m.**
- High Schools: Early Release Time 12:52 p.m.**
- Fairview South School: Early Release Time 12:42 p.m.**

These changes are being made as part of the master contract agreement between the school district and its teacher employees. The two-year contract is for the school years 2007-08 and 2008-09.

The school calendar is among the provisions subject to collective bargaining. The agreement was ratified by both the teachers association and the Board of Education on Tuesday, November 27, 2007, at which point publicity began about the Early Release schedule and times.

First Semester: 2008-09

Second Semester: 2008-09

First Day of School-Sept. 2, 2008

Classes Resume-Jan. 5, 2009

- 1 Thursday, September 11, 2008**
- 2 Thursday, September 25, 2008**
- 3 Thursday, October 9, 2008**
- 4 Thursday, October 23, 2008**
NO SCHOOL-Teachers Convention-Oct. 30, 31, 2008
- 5 Thursday, November 6, 2008**
NO SCHOOL-Teacher Workday-Nov. 7, 2008
NO SCHOOL K-8 ONLY-Conferences-Nov. 14, 2008
NO SCHOOL-Thanksgiving Break-Nov. 26, 27, 28, 2008
- 6 Thursday, December 11, 2008**
NO SCHOOL-Winter Recess-Dec. 22, 2008-Jan. 2, 2009

- 7 Thursday, January 8, 2009**
- 8 Thursday, January 22, 2009**
NO SCHOOL-Teacher Workday-Jan. 26, 2009
- 9 Thursday, February 5, 2009**
- 10 Thursday, February 19, 2009**
- 11 Thursday, March 5, 2009**
- 12 Thursday, March 19, 2009**
NO SCHOOL-Teacher Workday-Mar. 30, 2009
NO SCHOOL (P.M.) K-5 ONLY-Conferences-Apr. 3, 2009
NO SCHOOL-Spring Break-Apr. 9-17, 2009
- 13 Thursday, April 23, 2009**
- 14 Thursday, May 7, 2009**
- 15 Thursday, May 21, 2009**
NO SCHOOL-Memorial Day-May 25, 2009
- 16 Thursday, June 4, 2009**
Last Student Day-June 12, 2009

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE LUNCH PROGRAM?

A. Schools will serve lunch on early release days and it will be part of the scheduling at each school.

Q. WHY CAN'T THE TEACHERS MEET AFTER SCHOOL?

A. Teachers can and do meet after school for some activities, but, this is an additional cost over and above the cost of substitutes. We believe that this calendar structure will reduce the need for after school meetings as well as reduce the amount of substitute coverage that is currently in place.

Q. HOW WOULD THE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS RECEIVE THE SAME NUMBER OF SPECIAL CLASSES LIKE MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ART? HOW WOULD THE SCHEDULE WORK AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL?

A. An equalized schedule will be organized much like it is now to ensure equal exposure to all specials. At the middle school, an equal number of A-days and B-days will be scheduled among the early release days.

Q. WOULD THE BUSES BE ABLE TO PICK UP THE STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE EARLY RELEASE DAYS?

A. The bus company has been informed of the change and the District understands that it would be able to accommodate this schedule.

Q. WOULD THE SCHOOL DISTRICT PROVIDE CHILD CARE FOR THE YOUNGER STUDENTS?

A. At this time there are no plans for child care, however the school district would be open to child care programming by outside vendors should the need be there.

Q. GIVEN THAT SOME STUDENTS LOITER DURING EARLY RELEASE, WHAT ABOUT SUPERVISORY ISSUES? HOW WILL THEY BE CONTAINED FOR A LONGER BLOCK OF TIME?

A. According to middle and high school administrators, students generally have a place to go when they are released shortly after noon versus early release of just one hour. Thus there is no real concern about supervisory issues with the new calendar structure. At the elementary level, activities are sometimes planned specifically for early release days (for example, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts). There may be opportunities to address childcare needs as described in the previous question/answer above.

Q. WHAT TIME WOULD SCHOOL BE DISMISSED ON EARLY RELEASE DAYS?

A. On each early release day school will be dismissed 2 hours and 15 minutes earlier than usual. At the elementary level, school will be dismissed at 1:27 p.m. At the middle schools, dismissal will be at 12:15 p.m. At the high school level dismissal will be at 12:52 p.m.

Q. DO OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS STRUCTURE THE CALENDAR IN THIS WAY?

A. Some school districts use after school meetings, which would require paying an additional amount at the "curriculum rate" (currently \$23.10 per hour in Elmbrook). Other districts schedule half days throughout the year, such as once per month or several times per year. Elmbrook was a leader when it began using weekly early releases in 1991. Twelve minutes were added to each school day to allow for early release to occur more often than in other districts. The goal is to reduce the amount of time required during instructional time as well as outside the contracted school day. The reality is that more than the current 60–90 minutes of time is needed to accomplish all that is required.

Q. CAN THE DISTRICT FIT ALL OF ITS INITIATIVES INTO THE EARLY RELEASE DAYS PROPOSED?

A. Members of the curriculum staff did an analysis of how the early release days are currently used as well as potential use. It is anticipated that these blocks of time will meet the needs of most curricular initiatives in the district.

Q. FOR WHAT SORT OF THINGS DOES THE DISTRICT USE EARLY RELEASE?

A. Schools have identified specific needs within their school improvement plans and school goals to increase student achievement. Among those are the black/white achievement gap and special education achievement goals. Early release time is also used for curriculum planning, training and implementation. Teachers are scheduled to work 30 minutes longer on each early release day and those days are planned out in advance to take full advantage of the 2.75 hours available 16 times per year. Further information will be announced to the community as other items arise.

Q. HAVE THE START AND END TIMES CHANGED FOR THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY TO ALLOW FOR EARLY RELEASE?

A. No. The school day will remain the same:
Elementary Schools: 8:50 a.m. - 3:42 p.m.
Middle Schools: 7:20 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
High Schools: 7:55 a.m. - 3:07 p.m.
Fairview South School: 8:50 a.m. - 2:57 p.m.