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**Reasons for Not Extending the School Day**

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Students may get worn out if school hours are extended.

*It seems logical to assume that more time spent in school will equal improved test scores and greater learning. In addition, proponents of a longer school day often argue that it keeps kids off the streets and in a safe environment. For this reason, many parents and community leaders advocate an extended school day. There are, however, equally compelling reasons for not extending the school day.*

**Research Doesn't Support It**

Research does not clearly support longer hours spent in school, according to the "Chicago Tribune," which reports that not a single study has linked improved student performances to longer school days. Although some schools with longer school days do show higher test scores, it is difficult to link the test scores directly to more hours of instruction because there are many other variables. For example, students in private schools or in affluent school districts usually receive more parental support at home, according to the same article in the "Chicago Tribune."

**It Would Be Expensive**

A longer school day means money -- and lots of it. Not only would the teachers and staff need to be compensated for working extra hours, but more money would be needed to maintain the school buildings, especially in winter when daylight fades before the final bell rings, and colder temperatures set in. The National Education Association estimates that the average added cost would be around $1,200 per student, per year for most school districts.

**It Would Limit After-School Activities**

Extending the school day by even an hour or two will wreak havoc on after-school activities such as sports and dance lessons. High schools in particular often fill up the time after school with football, softball and other team practices. Clubs such as debate, jazz band and other groups use that time to practice. Add to that tutoring and after-school jobs, and you have a lot of important, enriching activities that would be suddenly unavailable to students after school.

**It Won't Fix the Problems**

Extending the school day may be looked on as a catch-all solution for the problems in our education system, but that is a simplistic approach. In fact, most of the issues might be better solved with more efficient use of the time the students already have in the classroom. One study showed that students are only on task for about a third of the school day, according to the Philadelphia Public Schools. Opponents argue that other solutions will be overlooked if legislators simply extend the school day rather than getting to the root of the problems with student achievement, which include poverty, student behavior, a lack of resources in the classroom and learning disabilities -- none of which can be easily solved with longer school days.