ABOUT THE ORIGINAL STUDY

The Effects of the Four-Day School Week on Teacher Recruitment and Retention

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Why It Matters

Districts increasingly adopt four-day school weeks to improve staffing. This study contrasts educator perceptions with estimates of effects on recruitment and retention in Missouri.

Data and Sample

The study combines qualitative interviews with Missouri administrative data and difference-in-differences models. Its estimates concern Missouri districts and the adoption periods observed, not all four-day schedules nationally.

Key Findings

- Educators interviewed generally perceived recruitment and retention benefits from four-day schedules.
- The quantitative analysis found no evidence that adoption improved teacher retention or expanded districts' teacher workforces.
- New hires shifted toward teachers with prior Missouri experience; the authors' checks suggest that null retention findings are unlikely to reflect saturation alone.

Policy Implications

- Avoid assuming that positive educator perceptions establish staffing benefits from a four-day schedule.
- Weigh staffing claims against broader evidence on instructional time and student outcomes; this study does not estimate all benefits and costs.
- Address underlying rural staffing challenges through resources and supports, and evaluate approaches that preserve student learning.

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