

**[ DECS ORDER NO. 1, s. 1993, January 04, 1993 ]**

**INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAYS AND  
TIME ALLOTMENT IN THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
CURRICULUM**

A

Increase in Number of Elementary Class Days

1. It is desirable to increase the amount of elementary student contact time during the school year, in order that classroom instruction might be more effective. For this reason, the number of class days for the school year for all public and private elementary schools shall be increased from the present minimum of 185 days to a new minimum of 200 days, or an increase of 8 percent (8%).
2. The beginning of the school year shall be moved to the first Monday of June, and the Christmas holiday break shall be reduced, however, no classes should be held the last two calendar days before Christmas, nor the calendar day immediately after the New Year. All class days should be completed before the end of March, although private schools may opt for later completion. A separate school calendar shall be subsequently issued for the school year. Individual schools may, for the time being, determine how the additional 15 days shall be utilized, in terms of class activities, either through an expansion of existing subject matter, and/or enrichment through the provision of additional subject matter. Schools shall be permitted to meet these minimum requirements by holding classes on selected Saturdays to offset lost days or by other acceptable arrangements, upon prior notice to the appropriate DECS office.

B

Time Allotment in Certain Elementary Subjects

3. In addition, the results of the regional pilot tests of the National Achievement Tests as well as preceding tests have revealed that elementary school pupils in all grades showed consistently lower performance in the different subjects, particularly in English, Mathematics, and Science. While several measures adopted to improve instruction have already been done, one other measure is to increase the learning time and using such time productively.
4. To ensure the improvement of pupil achievement in these particular areas, the daily period for English in Grades I through VI shall be increased from 60 to 80 minutes; Mathematics in Grades I through III from 40 to 60 minutes; and Science and Health of 40 minutes introduced in Grades I and II in the New Elementary School Curriculum. The new Time Allotment and sample Class Programs, attached as Enclosures 1 and 2 respectively indicate the proposed use of the additional time made available. In any case, the minimum number of student contact hours for the daily 40-minute period, for example, shall now be 133.3 hours for the school year