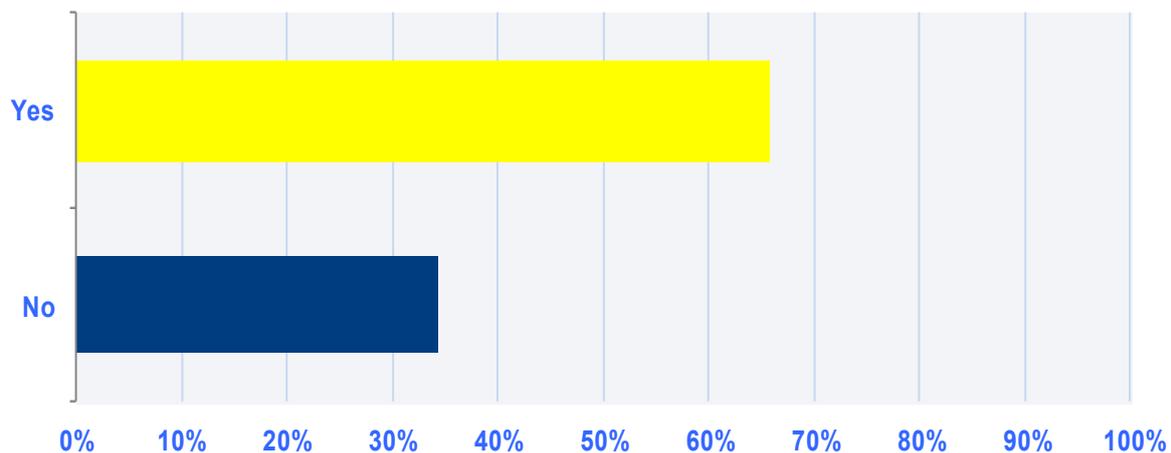




Should Schools Operate Longer Hours?



Recently, some schools across Australia have reviewed the length of their school day - reigniting the debate over whether it is time for a 'generational reboot' of school hours for the 21st century.

The Australian government has indicated it would consider increasing funding to schools to keep them open longer.

SAASSO recently conducted a survey of members; with an overwhelming response.

Positives raised by those who completed the survey were:

- Increasing school hours would relieve financial pressure on working parents.
- A longer school day would reduce the need for homework.
- A longer school day would give more time to cover a crowded curriculum and still leave time for art, drama, music, student well-being and exercise.

Negatives raised include:

- The impact on teachers.
- Reduced time with families
- Too long a day for children.

- 65.63% of respondents voted that schools should extend their hours.
- 34.37% say school hours should stay the same.

93.60% of respondents identified themselves as parents.

26.30% of respondents said they worked in a school.

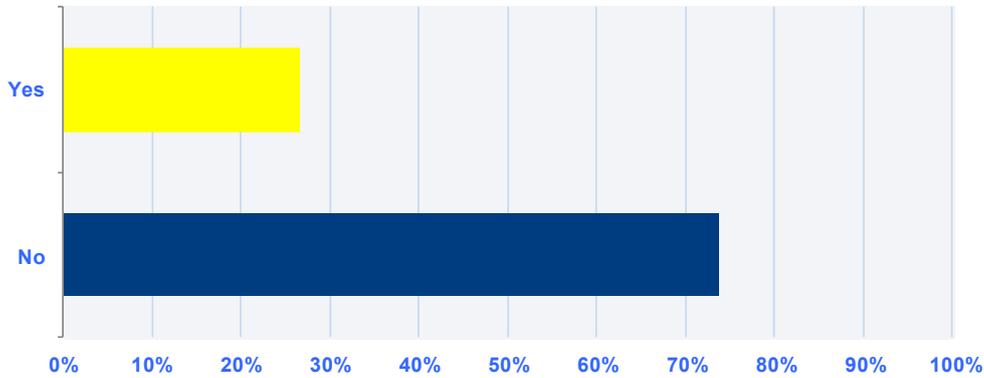
Respondents who worked in schools were far more likely to oppose any extension of school hours.

When asked how long the school day should be:

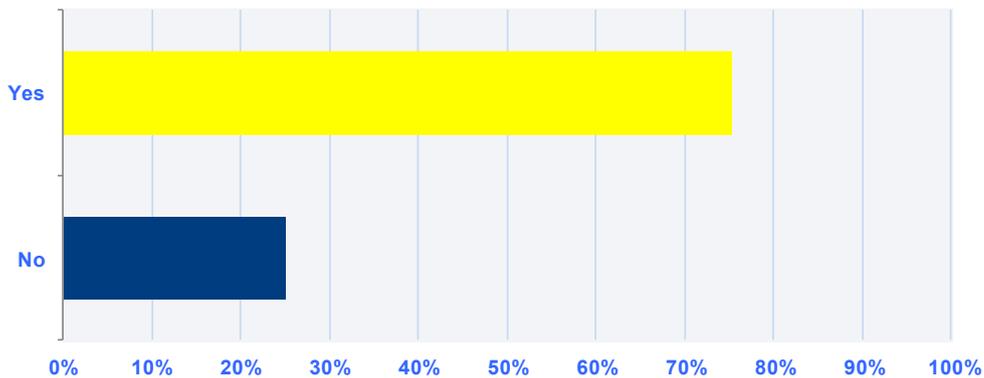
- 51.31% voted for 8 hours
- 33.73% voted to continue the current hours
- 10.21% voted for 10 hours
- 3.80% voted for 9 hours
- 1% voted for 12 hours.
- 64.99% of all respondents had placed their children in Out Of School Hours Care (OSHC).
- 67.55% of respondents had enrolled their children in childcare.



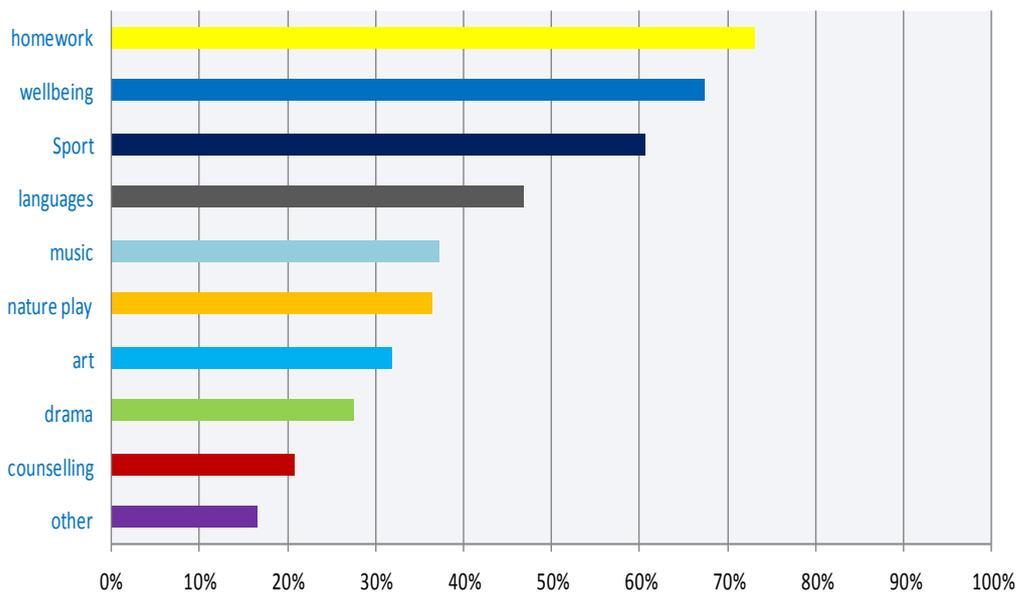
Do you work in a school?



Should secondary schools offer evening classes?



What should longer school hours be used for?



Selected Comments



Where parents are unable (due to finances, mental health or distance) to provide children with after school activities such as art, acting, drama, sports, social skills groups, IT, etc.

Start school earlier during summer

Not necessarily Longer hours but hours spread over a longer day ending at say 5pm. This would allow teachers to concentrate on specific subjects outside the standard 3R's subjects and allow the more social/amenities subjects better time frames.

In any other workplace, if you aren't getting the job done you stay back and finish! Obviously 5 hours a day isn't getting the job done!

longer hours but 4 days per week would be easier for many families

I think it would be great on an elective style, where students can select their extracurricular activities based on their interests.

I think it is a great idea to extend school hours to allow students some time to complete homework.

Night classes for senior students with maybe later start times might work - but should be optional - not all students have access to public transport so night time travel could raise in itself other problems

Early / late tutorials or online / flipped learning should become the norm. The school community should determine what is best suited to delivery beyond current school hours.

I feel a longer day would ensure that students have enough time to spend on each subject per week as I know that some things are not done or completed at schools because they run out of time for them.

I don't like the kids having homework in primary school - stay at school extra 1/2 hour for homework then home time is family time

The schools are already there. They already have everything they need, so why have children picked up from there just to drive them down the road to go to Childcare, which we can't afford.

Absolutely. Schools should be about what is best for the kids and not what is convenient for the teachers.

I'm a single mum and I can't afford to only work 5 hours a day so I can drop off and pick up my daughter. Why shouldn't schools keep up with the times?

Teachers keep complaining they don't have enough time to teach - give them more time. Great idea.

It's not like in my day - kids can't walk home and go to the local park to play. Instead of paying a fortune for childcare, why not have them in a safe, known environment, where there is also the option of valuable activities?

Good thing our hospitals aren't still run like its 1950.

It appears to work well in other countries particularly for secondary students.

How would the critics react if other tax-payer funded services like police stations, hospitals, fire brigades etc. only operated between 9 and 3?

The school day is long enough. Students and teachers are tired by the end of the day. Our students are already involved in extracurricular activities including, Drama Club, Science Club and after school sports.

I feel the school hours are sufficient. Children need recreation and family time.

Teachers need the time after school for marking and lesson preparation, phone calls to parents, report writing etc. as we don't have any time to do these things during normal working hours as it is.

As a parent and also working in a school, I believe the current school hours are long enough. If you have quality teaching, required curriculum outcomes should be able to be achieved in the current time frame.

Provide earlier lunch (our school is 1.05 which is too late) and then a recess type break in the afternoon

Time at home is important for a child's development, learning life's skills with the parents, eg...cooking dinner with mum, also doing out of school activities!

Does this mean teachers work shifts?

Burnout of teachers also needs to be considered. Will there be two teaching shifts? A designated break between school and evening lessons

Kids definitely need more time at home with parents!!!

Too many student free days and school closures stop putting kids up a year level and passing kids who are clearly in need of further learning help.

I can see longer hours benefiting parents that work, however teachers are stretched now to do the hours.

I believe education is failing because teaching staff do not have the resources or the help they need from the admin staff. From the principal down. There appears to be too many public servants, beaurocrats thinking they are more important than the teaching staff.

The school hours should be changed to start later and end later in the day eg 11am to 7pm to fit better with the body clocks of children (as per research on their best and most alert times of the day).

Limited consideration to industrial requirements, and the flexibility needs of others.

Have you considered staffing costs?

If you want to have children, become a parent. give up some of your luxury's (like our parents did) and do your parenting job, don't expect everyone else to look after Your children.

Teachers should be paid more as they have face to face time and marking and preparation time that creeps into their after school hours. No work life balance.

Let kids be kids. they have enough to deal with these days.