

Many elementary libraries are moving to flexible schedules.

This pamphlet is designed to introduce the concept of flexibly scheduled library programs and to explain the benefits of this schedule.



Many parents are used to the fixed library schedule where students visit the library as part of their “specials” rotation. This practice has become outdated as it restricts access to resources. If a student checks out a book on Tuesday, he should not have to wait until the following Tuesday to exchange it. Students should be able to visit the library every day if needed.

Fixed schedules also leave little if any room in the library schedule for students to use technology or conduct research, two essential skills for success in an information-based society.



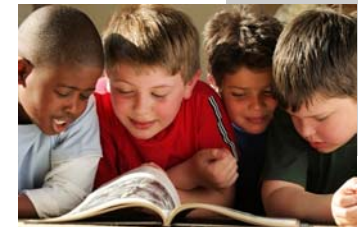
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Flexible scheduling & your school library

A guide for parents



**Lewisville ISD
Library Services**

What is flexible scheduling?

Flexible scheduling means that instead of students visiting the library one day per week, the library is now open to them all day, every day. Students can go to the library whenever necessary instead of just one day per week at an appointed time.



Students are able to visit individually, in small groups or as an entire class to read, browse and conduct research at any time during the school day.

This is different from the more traditional, rigid schedule where previously students were able to visit the library only one day per week during their “specials” time. Students were not accompanied by their teacher, and the information skills they received were taught out of context. Under this type of schedule, students averaged only 36 visits per year and received disjointed instruction. With flexible scheduling, they can go any day and learn library information skills as part of the core curriculum.

Advantages of a flexible schedule

- *Greater access to library resources—during entire instructional day.*
- *Increased circulation as students may exchange books daily instead of weekly.*
- *Information/research skills integrated into the curriculum and learned more effectively.*
- *Classes can spend several consecutive days in the library to work on projects.*
- *Students will have practice with the open-access schedule when they move to middle and high school.*



What does flex scheduling look like?

Parents are understandably concerned that with changes to the library schedule, their children may not receive some of the traditional aspects of library sessions, such as regularly scheduled check out and story times. This is not the case. A flexible schedule is not an unstructured one, it is still a schedule. It is, as the name implies, flexible.

Students will still have the opportunity to visit the library as the teacher allows, they will still be able to participate in story times. But now, instead of a 45-minute class, check-out and story time may be longer or shorter depending on that day’s activities, and the teacher may go with the class to the library. Library visits may be added as a center during Language Arts instruction. In addition, there will be room in the schedule for the librarian to work with classes while they conduct research and practice resource-based learning.

The need for flexible access

Today’s students need for not only good reading skills, but have an increasing need for the ability to locate, evaluate, and utilize information in a variety of forms. The library is the school’s main information center, and the librarian is trained in how to teach students these valuable skills.

The core subject area TEKS now include a research component in all grades. The best way to teach these research skills is through integrating them into the core curriculum in the form of resource-based units. A flexibly scheduled library program encourages teacher/librarian collaboration to develop resource-based instruction.

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