Proposed schedules for the coming school year that would lengthen the school day for students will be presented to the School Board for approval, according to Associate Superintendent Donald Hoover.

Hoover said the adjustments would allow 30 more minutes of instructional time each day at each grade level.

Under the proposal, elementary schools would begin at 8:30 a.m. rather than 8:45 a.m. and would end at 3:15 p.m. rather than 3 p.m.

Middle school students would start at 7:30 a.m. rather than 7:45 a.m., but the school day would still end at 2:30 p.m.

High school students would start 15 minutes earlier, at 7:30 a.m., and would get out of school five minutes earlier, at 2 p.m.

Hoover said he doesn't envision any major problems in lengthening the school day — although the question of providing additional compensation for teachers still needs to be addressed.

State education officials have said their position is that no extra compensation is necessary for teachers because teachers aren't being asked to work longer days.

E. Ray Reecb, the Louisiana Department of Education's executive director of instruction, said all schools operate for longer than six hours a day, but some of that time is taken up by non-instructional activities, such as planning periods and lunches.

The Louisiana Association of Educators, a group representing teachers, said it strongly disagrees with the position taken by the state Department of Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Lawrence Narcisse, the LAE's director of governmental relations, said any increase in the instructional time required each day or any lengthening of the school day should be matched by a proportional increase in pay.

Reecb said BESE, following the state department's recommendation, recently adopted a budget request that does not seek any additional state funds, so school systems could, if they choose, pay teachers more for spending 30 minutes more each day in the classroom.

Both Narcisse and Mike Deshotels, the LAE's coordinator of field services, said their organization already is working on legislative proposals that would force school systems to pay extra compensation if the school day or classroom instructional time is extended.