



SCHOOL CALENDAR AND LOCAL UPDATE

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NC School Calendar Law

Overview

- School start and end dates for all 115 LEAs dictated by the General Assembly.
 - Start no earlier than Monday closest to Aug 26.
 - End no later than Friday closest to June 11.
 - Weather exemptions for qualifying LEAs allow start date to be Monday closest to Aug 19.
- **NC is 1 of 2 states in the US where the start AND end dates for local school districts are dictated by the State legislature.**
- LEAs may go 185 instructional days or 1,025 instructional hours within this window.

NC School Calendar Law Overview



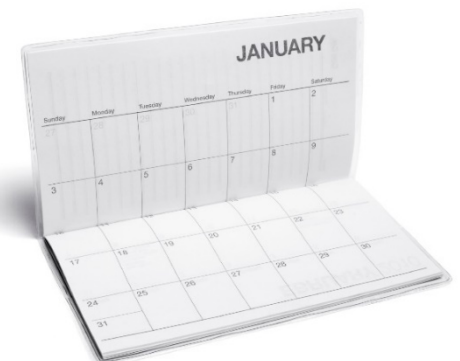
- Prior to passage of the school calendar law in 2004:
 - Most LEAs in NC started school before mid-August and ended in May.
 - 25% of LEAs in NC reduced the length of summer break to less than 10 weeks.

School Calendar Issues

- Local control- local education leaders not able to set a calendar that meets unique needs of their communities.
- Limited window for scheduling makeup days.
 - Saturdays
 - Holidays
 - Spring Break
- Limited options for professional development/teacher workdays.
- Out of alignment with community college start dates.
- Students taking 1st semester exams after Winter Break.
- Sports teams starting practices and games before school starts.

School Calendar Issues

- Limited options for addressing summer learning loss.
- More LEAs opting to schedule less than 185 instructional days during the school year.....at what point does this start to impact student learning???
- Scheduling headaches and difficulties.
- Charter schools and Restart schools have flexibility on calendars.....if it is good enough for them it should be good enough for **ALL** students!!!



2017 Legislative Study of School Calendar Law

- Study of school calendar law.
- Surveyed public, superintendents, school personnel, etc. about thoughts and views of the school calendar law.
- Many significant concerns noted.
- Recommended authorizing calendar flexibility for continuously low-performing schools and LEAs.
- No recommendation on larger calendar issue-
“no modification to the calendar law can satisfy competing interests.”

2017 Legislative Study of School Calendar Law

Local superintendents rated how current school calendar law impacts various scheduling tasks.

School Calendar Scheduling Task	Made Somewhat or Very Difficult
Scheduling make-up days	96%
Scheduling teacher workdays	94%
Aligning high school schedules with the schedule for the community college serving your LEA	94%
Scheduling professional development for teachers and other certified school employees	92%
Scheduling final exams for high school students	92%
Scheduling the opening and closing day of school	80%
Developing alternative school calendars to meet community needs	77%

2017 Legislative Study of School Calendar Law

Public opinion surveys

Exhibit 16: Public Opinion Favors Local School Districts Determining School Start Dates

Response Options	Elon University Poll (n=660)	High Point University Poll (n = 404)	Parent and School Personnel Survey (n=46,139)
State law should determine the start date for North Carolina public schools	25%	30%	15%
Local school districts should determine the start date for their schools	65%	62%	75%
No opinion/Did not respond	10%	9%	10%

2017 Legislative Study of School Calendar Law

- Will be on the NCSBA Legislative webinar page!

<https://www.ncsba.org/governmental-relations/webinars>

Local Calendar Flexibility Bills - 2017

- During 2017 there were 53 local bills filed to give individual local school districts full calendar flexibility.
 - Covering 82 LEAs.
- Some written to allow the district to align start date with local community college.
- Several filed on the Senate side.

House Bill 375

- Allows LEAs to align school start dates with start date of their local community colleges.
- No earlier than August 15.
- Example:
 - Wake Tech begins Fall 2018 classes on August 16, 2018.
 - If HB 375 became law, Wake County Schools would be able to start the 2018 school year as early as August 16.
- HB 375 passed House in 2017 by vote of 108-6.
- Sitting in Senate Rules.
- Eligible for action at any time in 2018.

House Bill 389

- Pilot program
- Allow 20 specified LEAs to start the school year as early as August 10.
- 3-year pilot.
- Study impact on student achievement, travel/tourism.

House Bill 389 – LEAs in the Pilot

- Anson
- Bladen
- Cabarrus
- Caldwell
- Cherokee
- Cleveland
- Davidson
- Duplin
- Graham
- Greene
- Guilford
- Martin
- McDowell
- Mitchell
- Northampton
- Robeson
- Rowan-Salisbury
- Warren
- Washington
- Wilson

House Bill 389

- Passed House in April by 104-6 vote.
- Sitting in Senate Rules.
- Eligible for action at any time during 2018 session.

Other Factors to Note

- Several districts utilizing the Restart Model for their low-performing schools.
- Restart Model is an option to operate the school with the same freedoms and flexibilities as charter schools.
- In their applications, many districts cite the desire to have calendar flexibility as a reason for seeking Restart Model status.
- Some districts discussing year-round multi-track schooling models.

L.O.C.A.L. Coalition

- Let Our Calendar Authority Be Local
- Cross-section of organizations supporting more local control of school calendars.
- Website: www.nclocalcalendars.net
- Twitter: @nclocalcalendar
- Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/nclocalcalendars>
- Providing updates and articles on school calendar issues.
- Grassroots support for HB375 and HB389.

What You Can Do

- Continue emphasizing to **Senators** why more calendar flexibility is important.
 - Talk about HB375 and HB389 as bills they can pass to help you in 2018!
- Keep calendar flexibility front and center in your discussions with your legislative delegation.
- Talk about the issue with candidates for GA in 2018....ask them where they stand on the issue!!
 - Raise the issue in candidate/public forums.
- Remind lawmakers that charter schools and Restart schools have calendar flexibility....all we are asking is that traditional schools be given this same authority.
- Follow the LOCAL coalition on Twitter and/or Facebook....share the tweets and posts and engage others.

Contact:

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- Upcoming Legislative Webinars
 - May 7- School Safety
 - May 14- Short Session Preview

<https://www.ncsba.org/governmental-relations/webinars>