

School Calendar for the 2022 – 2023 School Year

Legal Considerations

Iowa Code §§ 279.10, School year — beginning date — exemption, places the school calendar in the sole authority of the board of directors of a school district. It further states that the board must hold a public hearing on any proposed school calendar prior to adopting it. Also stated in the law, the “school calendar shall begin no sooner than August 23” and include “not less than one hundred eighty days or one thousand eighty hours of instruction during the calendar year.”

Review of Research

Research on school calendars is limited. The latest research simply says that students learn and retain better if they have breaks between their instructional terms. This may suggest some days off for students between each quarter.

Background

Each year, it is the responsibility of the school board to approve a school calendar for the next year. The superintendent holds the responsibility to make recommendations to the board for calendar adoption. School board policy 601.1, School Calendar, reads in part, “It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop the school calendar for recommendation, approval, and adoption by the board annually.”

Staff Survey

I took a survey of all faculty and staff on their preferences for a school calendar. Only 32 responded, but here is what the majority would like to see in their calendar for next year:

- a. Nearly two-thirds (63%) would prefer a five-day break at Thanksgiving.
- b. 48% support using their parent-teacher conferences comp day to help make a five-day break. Only 28% oppose.
- c. 47% would like two full weeks of holiday break at Christmas and New Year's.
- d. 43% would like one full week for spring break; 33% oppose.
- e. 73% would like the school year to adjourn prior to Memorial Day Weekend.

Working with NIACC, Hampton-Dumont, and West Fork

We anticipate having a cooperative vocational program operational by fall in cooperation with NIACC, Hampton-Dumont, and West Fork. This draft of the calendar was developed in conjunction with those schools.

Recommended Action

I recommend the board only discuss the calendar at this time. Final action is currently scheduled for Thursday, February 24, and will be preceded by a public hearing.