



Subject: School Code Waiver Public Hearing
Date: May 6, 2025

To better align professional development days (Institute and School Improvement) with key points in the school year, when teachers most need training, we have carefully considered student attendance and parent schedules. Through this review, we found that using 10 Early Dismissal days disrupts instructional continuity for students and creates childcare challenges for parents. Therefore, I recommend the district to apply for an Illinois School Code waiver for an alternative use of School Improvement (SIP) Days.

A waiver would allow the district to combine the five half-SIP days permitted by the school code into two and a half SIP days, eliminating the use of Early Dismissal days.

If approved, I recommend the following schedule for Institute and SIP days:

- **Institute Days:**
 - August 11, 2025 (prior to the start of the school year)
 - November 25, 2025 (aligned with Family School Conferences and the Thanksgiving break)
 - January 20, 2026 (the day after Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
- **Full SIP Days:**
 - September 2, 2025 (adjacent to Labor Day)
 - October 14, 2025 (adjacent to Indigenous Peoples' Day)
These dates allow schools to review progress on SIP goals using MAP fall and winter data, and to engage in targeted professional development.
- **Half SIP Day:**
 - February 26, 2026 (the day before County Institute Day)

This recommendation increases instructional time for students and strengthens the model for delivering effective professional development for our staff. Additionally, we anticipate that families will appreciate a reduction in mid-year non-attendance days.