

Exploring A Semester Calendar

April 28, 2011

Purpose: To obtain feedback from the community, parents, staff and the Board regarding elements of a Semester Calendar.

Goal: Obtain information from all stakeholders to inform a staff recommendation regarding a School Calendar.

Traditional School Calendar

Summer Break	✧ School Starts: Late August / Early September
Approximately 70 – 75 Days	✧ First day determined by Labor Day ✧ Holidays- Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving
Winter Break	✧ Two-week long Winter Break
Approximately ??? Days	✧ Includes Christmas Day & New Year’s Day ✧ 3 weeks: finals, end of semester, start of new semester ✧ Holidays- Martin Luther King, President’s Day
Spring Break	✧ One-week long Spring Break (Traditionally tied to Easter. Varies every year)
Approximately ??? Days	✧ Testing Window: Mid April / Early May ✧ Memorial Day
Summer Break	✧ School Ends: Mid June

Traditional School Calendar

Summer Break
Approximately 70 – 75 Days
Winter Break
Approximately ??? Days
Spring Break
Approximately ??? Days
Summer Break

✧ Pros:

- ✧ **Traditional: We know what to expect**
- ✧ **Similar to neighboring school calendars**
- ✧ **Longer summer**
- ✧ **No clean break between semesters**
- ✧ **Non-Resident teachers more likely to have same calendar as their children**

✧ Cons:

- ✧ **Not tied to quarter, trimester or semester**
- ✧ **HS students return after winter break to finals**
- ✧ **Grading and homework over holidays and breaks**
- ✧ **'Retention Loss' during longer summer**
- ✧ **Spring Break inconsistent from year to year**

School Calendar Tied to Semester Grading Period

Summer Break
~ 45 Days of Instruction
Fall Break
~ 45 Days of Instruction
Winter Break
~ 45 Days of Instruction
Spring Break
~ 45 Days of Instruction
Summer Break

- ✧ **School Starts:** Late July / Early August
 - ✧ First day determined by Semester (Winter) Break
 - ✧ Traditional Holidays- Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving
- ✧ **One-week long Fall (Quarter) Break**
- ✧ **Two or Three week long Winter (Semester) Break**
 - ✧ Includes Christmas Day & New Year’s Day
- ✧ **One-week long Spring (Quarter) Break**
- ✧ **Testing Window:** Late March / Early April
- ✧ **School Ends:** Late May

School Calendar Tied to Semester Grading Period



✧ **Pros:**

- ✧ Calendar tied to instruction
- ✧ Consistent calendar year to year
- ✧ Breaks at naturally occurring times in grading cycle
- ✧ Similar to ASTI calendar
- ✧ Off season breaks
- ✧ Time between STAR and AP Testing (High School)
- ✧ More instructional days before AP Testing (High School)
- ✧ Increased retention between school years

✧ **Cons:**

- ✧ NOT familiar & requires change
- ✧ Shorter Summer: eight weeks vs. ten weeks
- ✧ Month of August can be hot in classrooms
- ✧ Changes beginning and ending of Summer Break

Types of AUSD Calendars in the Past

- ✧ **Types of Calendars:**
 - ✧ **Year Round Elementary Schools**
 - ✧ **Modified Year-Round (Transitional Year)**
 - ✧ **Traditional Calendars**
 - ✧ **ASTI – Tied to College of Alameda**
 - ✧ **WCDC – Year Round**

Questions To Consider

- ✧ **What type of calendar best supports a 21st century education for students?**
- ✧ **Does it make sense to tie the calendar to the semester?**
- ✧ **Do semesters need to be 90 days each or 85/95 days?**
- ✧ **What needs to happen to elicit support and education of students, parents, and educators?**
- ✧ **How would we transition to a semester calendar? Multi-year calendar?**
- ✧ **How would we work with agencies providing childcare support?**
- ✧ **What other questions need to be answered?**
- ✧ **What other considerations need to be thought through?**

Other Speakers

- ✧ **Patricia Sanders, President Alameda Education Association**
- ✧ **Sean McPhetridge, Assistant Superintendent Education Services**
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