



PROPOSED 2020-2021 CALENDAR UPDATED PRESENTATION

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2020-2021 CALENDAR FEEDBACK



- ❑ 1,689 total comments submitted as of April 24, 2020. Some comments had multiple parts, so they may be counted more than once (in different sections)
- ❑ 5 comments submitted through Let's Talk
- ❑ 1 comment submitted by email

COMMENT THEMES



PRO EARLY START:

❑ HEALTH + SAFETY:

- ❑ **2ND WAVE:** Could see a resurgence of COVID in winter. Get in school while we can.
- ❑ **THEORY ON STUDENT ILLNESS:** Need to reflect on attendance rates in December-February and consider the possibility that our students were already exposed to the virus before we even realized what was going on
- ❑ **DAYLIGHT:** Earlier start means 3rd tier schools will have more daylight at dismissal.
- ❑ **EARLIER SUMMER:** Letting out earlier gives children time to be on vacation during cooler months.

❑ STUDENT WELLBEING:

- ❑ **ROUTINE:** Children need routine. Start as early as possible to re-establish that routine. An earlier start is best for students and their families. Students have been without consistent learning, meals, and structure in their lives for too long. Families need a reprieve so they can get back to work and provide for themselves. A longer summer is a detriment to all.
- ❑ **AUG. 11 START DATE:** Will give district the extra time it needs. Will be like recent years, which will be comforting (routine).
- ❑ **SOCIAL INTERACTION:** Children need social interaction. They are missing their friends.
- ❑ **GOOD FOR TRANSITION YEARS:** Those going into high school or 1st grade or middle school get a little more time to acclimate.
- ❑ **GET OUT EARLIER:** Students become antsy starting in early May.

❑ ACADEMICS:

- ❑ **LOSING GROUND:** Worried about students losing ground while out. Start early to solidify what students learned this spring and ensure they are ready for the next school year. Students need extra review time. Going back as soon as possible protects student learning, achievement, and district data
- ❑ **NEW ELA CURRICULUM:** Need to start early so teachers are prepared (PD) for this.
- ❑ **EDUCATIONAL GAP:** Would give children who were unreachable or lacked technology during the stay at home order an opportunity to reduce their educational gap.

❑ STAFF IMPACT:

- ❑ **TIME FOR STAFF TO SETTLE IN, REDO CLASSROOMS:** Have staff return July 30.
- ❑ **READY TO RECONNECT:** Staff missing students.
- ❑ **START EARNING AGAIN:** For individuals who normally work summer school, there is not a too long of a gap in employment. As a 10.5 monthly employee I would welcome an earlier paycheck, I do not care about summer break.

COMMENTS THEMES



AGAINST EARLY START:

❑ THE LAW:

- ❑ **BREAKING LAW:** Against the new state law. What give SLPS the right to break the law?
- ❑ **KEEP ALIGNMENT:** We should align with other districts and not be an outlier.
- ❑ **MAKE EFFORT:** We should try the Aug. 24 date before dismissing it.
- ❑ **MESSAGE TO STUDENTS:** Violating the law sends a bad message to students. What a great life lesson for our students. Don't like a law? Ignore it. If you can't ignore it, find a way around it.
- ❑ **PLANNING:** Vacations and PD were planned based on law. Cannot get refund. Multiple teachers saying they will miss the first week based on this.

❑ SAFETY:

- ❑ **NO VACCINE, TESTING:** There is no vaccine yet. Would not feel safe. Would want all staff and students to be tested before reopening. Don't feel safe sending my child back to school until there is a vaccine. Too early to bring together groups. What is plan for students whose parents will not send back until there is a vaccine?
- ❑ **TIMING:** City canceled July and August events. Why would we think we could start school just a few weeks later? Don't be part of what puts the City into a second wave. Rushing back too soon could possibly negate all progresses we've made to keep our families safe throughout quarantine thus far.
- ❑ **GOING SOLO:** Decision should be made with city, health department, other districts.
- ❑ **STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES:** Heat and bad air quality in July and August can impact children with diabetes, sickle cell and asthma.
- ❑ **SUMMER HEAT:** Buses will be hotter than usual if start earlier. Lots of schools have issues with AC. Cafeterias have AC issues. Not safe to make meals in the heat.
- ❑ **POPULATION AT HIGHER RISK:** African Americans represent 71% of the infection cases. SLPS services majority of African American students.
- ❑ **GUINEA PIGS:** As first schools to open, will be hardest hit by second COVID wave.
- ❑ **MEDICAL ADVICE:** Dr. Fauci said yesterday kids may be ready to go back to school by September. Why is district saying August?
- ❑ **SMALL CHILDREN:** We will need to address how small children can be socially distanced safely in a school setting.
- ❑ **REVISED SICK POLICY FOR CHILDREN:** What are the new policies when a student comes ill or gets ill and parents refuse to pick them up? All this needs to be addressed and advised to parents before school starts. We staff members should not have to be scapegoats for attendance and negligence.
- ❑ **CHILDREN OUT EARLY:** This will be two unproductive weeks, which will mean more unsupervised time and time in the dangerous streets.

COMMENT THEMES



AGAINST EARLY START:

❑ FINANCIAL IMPACT ON FAMILIES:

- ❑ **JOB LOSS/FURLOUGHS:** Many families have lost jobs. If start early, how will parents have enough time to get together money for school clothes, haircuts, etc.
- ❑ **TAX FREE WEEKEND:** Missouri tax free weekend is August 7-9. School should not start before parents are able to get supplies.
- ❑ **STUDENT JOBS:** Many high school students work during the summer starting in June to save money to support themselves and their families. This calendar takes away that ability.
- ❑ **IMPACT ON DISTRICT, INCLUDING SALARIES, STAFFING, ACCREDITATION:**
- ❑ **TEACHER RETENTION:** SLPS teachers go way over DESE required hours every year. Teachers understand our students need more support. If you wear out your teachers by making them work more hours than every other district, how will you keep them? The state requires 1,044 school hours a year. These calendars are: 1,122.3.
- ❑ **STAFF THREATS TO LEAVE DISTRICT:** Live in county, have worked for SLPS for 20 years. Can't afford childcare and missing weeks with my own child because SLPS is not aligned with other districts.
- ❑ **FINANCIAL HIT TO DISTRICT:** If we are penalized by state for starting early, we will lose resources. We always need more resources. Thought you wanted to consolidate schools to save funds, now there's extra money available for this penalty?
- ❑ **ACCREDITATION:** By thumbing our noses at the state, could we threaten our accreditation?
- ❑ **TEACHER SHORTAGE:** Will all positions be filled if start early? We need to be prepared to give our students what they deserve.

❑ INCONSISTENT WITH OTHER DISTRICTS:

- ❑ **CHARTERS/KC:** Not even other big districts or charters are starting so early. Confluence is starting Aug. 24. KC Public Schools are starting Aug. 24. I have heard whispers about how it is related to some charter schools.
- ❑ **INCONSISTENCY:** SLPS doesn't need to be inconsistent with other districts. Need to be in line with the region. SLPS acted in partnership with other districts when announcing closure, extension, why not now?

❑ PARTNER COMMENT:

- ❑ **SUMMER CAMP OPERATOR:** What you do impacts what other organizations who provide summer programming are able to do. This is going to impact our ability to even survive as an organization after 18 years, we cannot generate the income needed to keep our doors open. We also have staff that are counting on the income from teaching at our summer camps. Consider the organizations that support SLPS students in the summer time months.

COMMENT THEMES



AGAINST EARLY START:

❑ FACILITIES:

- ❑ **RECONFIGURING SCHOOLS:** Facilities will need time to reconfigure schools, so students and teachers can socially distance.
- ❑ **DEEP CLEANING:** Can't start in July or early August. Need time for facilities to thoroughly clean the buildings first. Are you hiring more custodians to do more disinfecting or are the teachers expected to do this on top of teaching?
- ❑ **LOGISTICS:** Still need to take down materials, decorations, from this year before can prep for next year. Not enough time to do that.
- ❑ **STUDENTS WILL FEEL PUNISHED:** An early start will make children feel punished. If you take away their ability to do camps, programs, etc.
- ❑ **STRESSED/NEED BREAK:** COVID-19 has been extremely stressful for all. Need a summer break to relax, regain normalcy. This is different than a regular end to a school year. Need more time to process, recuperate.
- ❑ **BURNOUT:** Teachers are working through the end of this school year. Should not have to return so early. Will lead to early burnout.
- ❑ **CHECK-INS WITH LOVED ONES:** If safe to travel in late summer, staff need time to check on loved ones who they haven't been able to see in months.

❑ FINANCIAL IMPACT ON STAFF:

- ❑ **CHILDCARE:** Starting and ending the school year at a different time than neighboring districts will be a financial hardship on staff. Some staff members are experiencing income cut in half b/c spouse lost job as a result of COVID. Will we be allowed to bring our children to PD, classroom set-up and first weeks of school? In light of COVID-19, many homes have went from a two-income family to one.
- ❑ **SUMMER JOBS:** Many teachers work summer jobs to make up for low pay in SLPS. Don't take that opportunity away.
- ❑ **COMPENSATION:** Will teachers get raises since they will be working an extra month compared to other districts who already get paid more? This is an approximate 7% increase in days, so will be getting a 7% increase in pay? If we end the school year earlier next year but then have to start later in August with the new law I'm worried about that time period being too long for staff without pay.
- ❑ **UNFAIR:** If district has money to pay penalty, should have money to pay teachers more. Unfair and despicable that the superintendent is willing to violate a state law and then pay a fine for doing so. However, at the same time he says there isn't money to pay for raises for staff that are constantly asked to do more and start earlier.

COMMENTS THEMES



AGAINST EARLY START:

❑ **BAD TIMING – STUDENTS/FAMILIES/STAFF:**

- ❑ **EARLY DISMISSAL:** If we start early, we will dismiss early which means students out before summer camps and programs start.
- ❑ **SPORTS:** SLPS students will be competing long after the school year ends. SLPS will be out of school before district playoffs (soccer). Then what? Will SLPS be paying for a bus to pick up every student from and bring them to practice and games till the end of the season? Or will SLPS not be participating in spring sport competitions?
- ❑ **INTERNSHIPS/VOLUNTEER HOURS:** If start early, students won't have time to do arranged internships or get the volunteer hours they need.
- ❑ **MISSED APPOINTMENTS:** Staff and families will need summer to make up missed doctor/dentist appointments, vaccines, etc.
- ❑ **TOO LATE FOR THIS CHANGE:** If a calendar like this was going to be presented, it should have been presented months ago, so families could plan. This is too late. Also, for this drastic of a change, should have had town halls for teachers/families. How do you expect teachers to plan when they won't know the beginning date of school until May 12? Working parents do not have this flexibility to accommodate big changes, like this. **STATE ECONOMY:** Parson adjusted the school year to help the economy. Will need that help more than ever after COVID.
- ❑ **COLLEGE VISITS:** Many students had to cancel visits planned for spring break. Hope to do them at the end of the summer before school starts. If school starts early, that won't be possible.
- ❑ **COLLEGE DROPOFFS:** Staff need to be able to take their children to college.
- ❑ **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** Eid al-Adha, one of the holiest Muslim holidays is from July 30-August 3, and many of our Muslim students are often not present for these dates.
- ❑ **LATE ENROLLMENT:** Always get students enrolling later in fall. They will be even more behind than they are during a regular school year.
- ❑ **ATTENDANCE:** Attendance will be terrible if don't start at same time as other districts.
- ❑ **PRE-SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES:** PTOs, schools have planned for an Aug. 24 start date. Will mess up their plans.
- ❑ **PRE-K STUDENTS STARTING WITH SLPS:** Can't get in right now to see doctors to get vaccines, other records needed to start school.
- ❑ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Most opportunities for teachers are scheduled for July.
- ❑ **UNBALANCED:** 20 weeks in 2020 and only 18 weeks in 2021 seems disproportionate.

COMMENTS THEMES



AGAINST EARLY START:

❑ ACADEMIC/ATTENDANCE IMPACT:

- ❑ **SUMMER SLIDE:** What is point of virtual learning if we don't act like it counts. If start and end early, there will be worse summer slide next year.
- ❑ **VIRTUAL LEARNING:** Students are still learning during this time. It isn't a vacation. No need to move back to buildings so early. Virtual learning has been around more than 20 years. Give it a chance. What is created doesn't expire and can be used again and again.
- ❑ **FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY:** Instead of rushing back, spend energy improving virtual learning and meal distribution systems, so they can be successful for the long-term, if needed. Lack of in-service training for teachers on technology is unacceptable.
- ❑ **MAP TESTING:** Early start won't give enough time for MAP and makeups.
- ❑ **AP TESTING:** Timing won't align. AP tests are not done by the timeline of #1, and would likely only be finishing on the last day on #2. Juniors and Seniors would have to be let back into closed buildings after the school year is over according to #1, and racing the clock on #2.
- ❑ **EXAMS/ATTENDANCE:** The last day of school should be 5/28. Having students come back after the holiday for final exams will only cause an onslaught of parent requests to have their child take exams early. The end, most students will be absent the last week of school anyway. Ending school in early May runs directly up against EOCs (algebra 1&2). Students would be taking EOCs, finals, and in some cases, AP exams simultaneously.
- ❑ **NOT ENOUGH DAYS:** I am very concerned about the reduction in instructional days proposed by these plans. Both options presented schedule 174 days of instruction. This is not only a two-day reduction from the 176 days scheduled this year but is six days short of the national average 180 days. This shortening of the school year comes as the current generation of students are robbed of 48 instructional days, 25% of their formal learning for the entire year.

❑ STAFF CONFUSED, SURPRISED, UPSET

- ❑ **UNANSWERED QUESTIONS:** What does PD look like? Is first semester longer? Is there a fall break?
- ❑ **POOR MANAGEMENT:** The pandemic has revealed: teachers care about students and their education.
- ❑ **NO RATIONALE PROVIDED:** The PowerPoint doesn't provide a rationale for these recommendations. Understand the need for more instruction days to make up for lost time, but don't see that built in. Is this about days of instruction? Is this about getting kids back to school after a longer hiatus due to COVID-19? You are asking for feedback without giving us access to the considerations you are weighing. Seems like a missed opportunity. Need pros and cons for each proposal. These proposals look like a thinly-veiled attempt to move more school days before the MAP test. I cannot see any other justification to move the calendar. The virus likely isn't going to be "solved" by July anyway. I just do not understand the decisions this district makes. PLEASE be more transparent. People might support things more if they understood the reasoning.
- ❑ **BAIT AND SWITCH:** The early start is presented as though it is a response to COVID, but if it's in the best interests of students, then why aren't other districts following suit. Was this determined before the pandemic? Will this be the new "norm" (starting early) for the school years going forward? If so, just be honest and tell parents/teachers: this is the direction we want to go in. Many people right now only think this is happening because of the virus, not because it was the plan prior to the global pandemic (as said in the school board meeting). The superintendent is now trying to take advantage of COVID-19 to circumvent this new legislation.

OTHER COMMENTS



OTHER REQUESTS/CONCERNS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ❑ **STUDENT ILLNESS:** Change policy so students cannot come to school when they are sick and must have a doctor's note to return.
- ❑ **CALENDAR NOTES:** Says return date from winter break is Jan. 1. Are we losing New Year's Day? Do not see spring break. Are we losing spring break?
- ❑ **ELECTION DAY:** Have it be a day off, not a PD day. Want to be able to vote, work the polls. Glad this is a day without students, safer for kids.
- ❑ **PTCs:** Give the Friday back as a day off during PTC weeks or move them to Thursday/Friday. Parent teacher conferences should not be in the middle of the week. That is a long day, and you do not pay us for being there longer. We need to return to having the Friday of that week off. No other district makes teachers work all five days. Go back to Thursday evening and Friday AM.
- ❑ **RECOMMENDED PTC SCHEDULE:** 1 day after school and the following day a half day—morning conferences only and no students. Having limited morning appointments for late-start schools and only after school times makes it very inconvenient for many families. PTCs are scheduled on St. Patrick's Day. Dewey parents will not be able to park because of the parade. Move Spring Break to week of St. Patrick's Day.
- ❑ **SPRING BREAK:** Like that SLPS's break aligns with other districts.
- ❑ **WINTER BREAK:** Like the length. Add a staff-only day after winter break before students return to allow teachers a planning day for the new semester.
- ❑ **OPINION ON CHARTERS:** instead of worrying about charters, focus on incentives to keep our best teachers in the district and partnering with families. Won't lose students to charters because of start date. Do lose students to charters because our buildings are run-down and we don't have new technology. Invest in schools, teachers and materials. Not starting the school year earlier. Will actually be advantageous to charters if we start early. When families miss registration for SLPS, they will move to a charter that is starting at the expected time of year.
- ❑ **OPEN HOUSE:** Every school should hold open house the day before the first day of school.

CHANGES AS A RESULT OF FEEDBACK



❑ JULY

- ❑ Created Virtual High School Summer School for July 6th – July 31st

❑ AUGUST

- ❑ Developed Summer School for Middle/Elementary Schools – August 3 – 14
- ❑ First class day for all students – August 24th instead of August 4th or 11th

❑ SEPTEMBER

- ❑ Changed PD Day to September 11th from September 18th

❑ MARCH

- ❑ PD added on March 19th

❑ MAY

- ❑ Changed last day of school for students from May 19th or 21st to June 3th

❑ JUNE 2021

- ❑ Last Day of School for students is June 3th
- ❑ Last Day of School for staff is June 4th
- ❑ Summer School move to June 9th – July 2nd

Student days 175. Teacher days 210.

COMPARISON OF CALENDARS



| KEY DATES | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 OPTION 1 | 2020-2021 OPTION 2 | 2020-2021 OPTION 3 |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Start of the school year (for 10 month employees) | August 5 th | August 3rd | August 10th | August 17 th |
| Start of the school year (for students) | August 13 th | August 4th | August 11th | August 24 th |
| Start of winter break | December 23 rd | December 21st | December 21st | December 21 st |
| Last day of winter break | January 3 rd | January 1st | January 1st | January 1 st |
| Length of winter break | 10 work days, 14 calendar days | 10 work days, 15 calendar days | 10 work days, 15 calendar days | 10 work days, 15 calendar days |

OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS



| SCHOOL DISTRICT | START DATE | WINTER | SCHOOL RESUMES | SPRING BREAK | END DATE |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Hazelwood | 08/24 | 12/21 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 6/4 |
| Lindbergh | 08/24 | 12/24-1/1 | 1/5 | 3/22-3/26 | 5/28 |
| Normandy | 08/24 | 12/21-12/31 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 6/4 |
| Parkway | 08/24 | 12/23-12/31 | 1/5 | 3/19-3/26 | 6/3 |
| Ritenour | 08/24 | 12/23-12/31 | 1/4 | 3/26-4/2 | 6/3 |
| Rockwood | 08/24 | 12/23-1/1 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 6/3 |
| SLPS Option 1 | 8/04 | 12/21-1/1 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 5/21 |
| SLPS Option 2 | 08/11 | 12/21-1/1 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 5/19 |
| SLPS Option 3 | 08/24 | 12/21-1/1 | 1/4 | 3/22-3/26 | 6/3 |
| University City | 08/24 | 12/21-12/31 | 1/5 | 3/22-3/26 | 5/28 |
| Webster Groves | 08/24 | 12/23-1/1 | 1/4 | 3/19-3/26 | 5/28 |

* Calendar not yet approved.

REQUEST



- ❑ To approve and adopt the 2020-2021 School Calendar.

In the FY2020-2021 School Year Calendar, please note the following: ten (8) Professional Development days; the first day for students occurs on Monday, August 24, 2020; last class day occurs June 4th, 2021; Winter Break is scheduled for ten (10) days; Spring Break is scheduled for five (5) days; two (2) recordkeeping days; four (4) parent conference days; There is a total of 175 student days. The hours of instruction per school day are 6 hours and 27 minutes.



QUESTIONS?