



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: January 4, 2023
FROM: Dr. Brent C. Jones, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Dr. Sarah Pritchett, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
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For Introduction: January 18, 2023
For Action: January 18, 2023

1. TITLE

Approval of the 2023-2024 School Year Calendar.

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report allows the School Board to establish the dates for when the school year starts and ends, which is required by state law. In addition, the development of the school year calendar is subject to bargaining with unions and certain calendar rules are outlined in the 2022-2025 Seattle Education Association (SEA) Certificated Employees Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board approve the 2023-2024 school year calendar as attached to the Board Action Report with any minor, non-substantive additions, deletions and modification deemed necessary by the Superintendent. Immediate action is in the best interest of the District.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

Under RCW 28A.330.100 the Board is to “fix the time for annual opening and closing of schools and for the daily dismissal of pupils before the regular time for closing schools.”

The District has an affirmative obligation under its CBA with the SEA to bargain the school calendar.

The 2023-2024 school year calendar has been created using the formula as outlined in the SEA CBA with the exception of the day between semesters. For the past two years due to inclement weather in 2021-2022 and strike days in 2022-23, there has not been the scheduled day between semesters (as it has been noted as the first inclement weather make up day). As such, the 2023-2024 school year has been negotiated with the SEA and does not have a day between semesters. A calendar without the day between semesters will be helpful in the event there are inclement weather or other delays which push back the end of the school year. Furthermore, had the calendar been implemented as specified in the CBA the start of second semester would have been on a Friday, following a non-school day on

Thursday, and the last day of school would have been on a Monday. Fridays and Mondays often have lower attendance for both student and staff. Low attendance would likely be amplified even more with the last day of school occurring after a weekend.

Labor and Employee Relations staff invited representatives from all thirteen (13) collective bargaining groups to review the revised 2023-24 calendar. Options were considered including adjusting of breaks. SEA agreed to the attached calendar and the other Unions have not raised concerns or objections.

Changes to the school calendars are mandatory subjects of bargaining. Any modifications to what are presented in this BAR must be negotiated through a formal bargaining process with labor partners. Changes would result in new language in the SEA/SPS Collective Bargaining Agreement or in the form of a new Memorandum of Understanding. Any future changes or modifications to these calendars would be brought forward to the Board for approval.

b. Alternatives

Not approve the calendar. This is not recommended as the 2023-2024 school year calendar must be set to allow all involved to engage in scheduling and planning and any alternative calendar would require the District to re-bargain with the Unions.

c. Research

N/A

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

There are no additional costs associated with this action.
The revenue source for this motion is N/A.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District's Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

The matter of the academic year calendar is primarily a subject of negotiations with SEA. Therefore, there is limited direct community engagement on the subject. However, the District

created a feedback form to capture community engagement on the 2023-24 calendar and SPS/SEA jointly created the document - *Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations*.

The feedback form was developed to gather input on the recommended calendar and to help inform calendar development in future years. The District provided the feedback form to the community and received thousands of responses.

The Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations document was created to help families, staff and students with questions and concerns regarding religious holidays and observances, and to assist schools/teachers in planning important events, testing, and exam dates. While we cannot change school year dates to accommodate every religious/cultural observance, it is understood that students may end up missing school and important school events in order to honor their religious practices. Because our school district is so large, our communities vary in their religious diversity. As a result, the district recognizes individual schools know their community and are asking schools to consider the days of religious/cultural observances that would occur within their school community and the accommodations and supports that can be provided to students if schools are unable to avoid scheduling educationally significant days on religious/cultural dates.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

This calendar incorporates previously negotiated student early release time that allows for more teacher collaboration time to address school improvement plans and work on ending opportunity gaps.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

Adoption of the revised calendar for 2023-2024 school years will allow for the development of individual school schedules, and for students and families to plan for and schedule family activities outside of school time.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

Contract initial value or amendment value exceeds applicable threshold (Policy No. 6220)

Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)

Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy

Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract

Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter

Board Policy No. 5020, Collective Bargaining, provides the Board shall approve this item

Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Per Board Policy No. 5020, Collective Bargaining, agreements resulting from collective bargaining are approved by the Board. The school calendar is collectively bargained with interested unions and the resulting agreement is presented to the Board for approval pursuant to RCW 28A.330.100. Further, the revised 2023-24 school year calendar will promote continuity of instruction.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was approved by the Board President and Superintendent to be added to the January 18, 2023, Board meeting.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the revised calendar will be distributed to the unions, employees, schools, and school communities. The calendar will also be distributed by the Communications Department via the SPS website and other means.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- 2023-2024 School Year Calendar (for approval)
- Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations (for reference)



2023-2024 School Year Calendar and Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations

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For questions and more information about this document, please contact the following:

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The 2023-2024 School Year Calendar identifies days that schools are in session, identifying days that are shorter than normal duration. The calendar also identifies weekdays when school is not in session and the reason school is not in session.

The Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations document was created to help families, staff and students with questions and concerns regarding religious holidays and observances, and to assist schools/teachers in planning important events, testing, and exam dates.

Guidance Regarding Religion and Religious Accommodations

Background:

During the 2019-2020 school year, Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Education Association created a joint workgroup to address equity and evaluate inclusive considerations related to religious and cultural observances and practices in developing student and work calendars. The workgroup sought to develop the calendar using the negotiated calendar formula (important dates) below, while also considering days which may have high impact on our communities. The goal of this calendar is to provide an at-a-glance look at the variety of religious holidays and observances to assist schools/teachers in planning important events, testing, and exam dates.

While we can't change school year dates to accommodate every religious/cultural observance, it is understood that students may end up missing school and important school events in order to honor their religious practices. Since our school district is so large, our communities vary in their diversity. As a result, the district recognizes individual schools know their community and are asking schools to consider the days of religious/cultural observances that would occur within their school community and the accommodations and supports that can be provided to students if schools are unable to avoid scheduling educationally significant days on religious/cultural dates. Further, Washington state law and the district's Superintendent Procedure 3121SP provides students an excused absence for the observance of a religious or cultural holiday.

This guidance being provided is based on guidance from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Important Dates:

The below dates were negotiated as a part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

- **First Day of School**
 - o The first Wednesday in September
- **State In-Service Day**
 - o As recognized by the State (typically the second Friday in October)
- **Winter Break**
 - o At least ten weekdays, ending after New Year's Day. If New Year's Day falls or is observed on a Monday, students will return to school on the next day (Tuesday)
- **Mid-Winter Break**
 - o President's Day and the following four workdays
- **Spring Break**
 - o Five days starting the second Monday in April
- **Snow Make-Up Days**
 - o At least three snow days shall be scheduled, including the day between semesters, and the first two days following the last day of school in June. Additional snow make-up days may be added in June if necessary
- **Holidays**
 - o Labor Day (when school begins before this day in September)
 - o Veteran's Day (November)
 - o Thanksgiving Day (November)
 - o The day after Thanksgiving (November)
 - o Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January)
 - o President's Day (February)
 - o Memorial Day (May)
 - o Juneteenth (June)

- **Contractual Days**
 - The four days immediately preceding the start of school, except for the Friday before Labor Day
- **Conferences**
 - Three consecutive days for conferences immediately preceding Thanksgiving Day

Student Absences

See policy 3121: [Attendance](#)

Though consistent attendance for students is essential, policy 3121 does provide that religious or cultural purposes are valid excuses for an absence. See below.

Policy 3121: Consistent attendance is essential to the Seattle Public Schools mission of academic excellences for every student in every school. To combat unexcused absences and truancy, all Seattle Public Schools are dedicated to providing racially, culturally, and age appropriate instruction and interventions and supports to remove barriers to consistent daily attendance.

Policy 3121 does state that religious or cultural purposes are valid excuses for an absence.

Superintendent Procedure 3121SP VIII.B.a.3. and 12. state:

a) *B. Excused Absences a) Absences due to the following reasons must be excused pursuant to RCW 28A.225.010 or WAC 392-401-020:*

3. Religious or cultural purpose including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural instruction (WAC 392-401-020); and

12. A reason of faith or conscience, or for an organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization, for up to two days per school year (RCW 28A.225.010(1)(e)).

See [Policy 3121/3121SP](#) in its entirety, however it does also provide that:

- The school principal (or designee) has the authority to determine if an absence meets the above criteria for an excused absence.
- If an absence is excused, the student will be permitted to make up all missed assignments outside of class under reasonable conditions and time limits established by the teacher of the class. However, in participation-type classes, a student's grade may be affected because of the student's inability to make up the activities conducted during a class period if an alternative assignment that aligns with the learning goals of the activities missed is not reasonable.
- An excused absence will be verified by a parent/guardian or an adult, emancipated or appropriately aged student, or school authority responsible for the absence. If attendance is taken electronically, either for a course conducted online or for students physically within the district, an absence will default to unexcused until such time as an excused absence may be verified by a parent/guardian or an adult, emancipated, or appropriately aged student. If a student of any age is to be released for health care related to family planning or abortion, the student may require that the District keep the information confidential. Students thirteen and older have the right to keep information about drug, alcohol or mental health treatment confidential. Students fourteen and older have the same confidentiality rights regarding HIV and sexually transmitted diseases.

Religious Accommodations for Students

See policy 2340: [Religion and Religious Accommodation](#)

Policy 2340 also states that students shall be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday.

Policy 2340: Upon receipt of a parent/guardian request, a student shall be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday. Students who are excused from class a religious accommodation must have an opportunity to make up any work, assignment or test missed as a result of the absence.

Policy 2340SP: The student's parent/guardian must submit a written request to the principal of the student's school, well enough in advance to allow the school to make appropriate arrangements and scheduling adjustments.

The written request must state –

1. The specific accommodation requested
2. Why the accommodation is needed
3. The amount of time, duration, and frequency of the accommodation

Testing dates - All dates are tentative until confirmed by testing agencies.

School staff should consider these testing windows and their building activities to make proper considerations for their school communities religious and cultural observances.

- Smarter Balanced (SBA) ELA and Math Assessments- March 6 to June 9 (Grades 3-8 and high school)
- Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS)- April 10 to June 2 (Grades 5 and 8)
- Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS)- April 10 to June 2(Grade 11)
- Advanced Placement (AP) & International Baccalaureate (IB)- *May to June* (High school students enrolled in these courses)

Religion and Religious Accommodations, 2023-2024

This aims to expand the awareness about the multiple forms of diversity among our students and families, and the days that students may or not be at school due to religious observances and the days that students may be fasting. It may also be helpful to guide better times to schedule educationally significant activities when the date can't be changed. For example, testing in the morning during periods when students eat at sundown.

The purpose of the calendar below is to assist in this effort to raise awareness about religious holidays practiced in public schools across the state of Washington.

This calendar was provided by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction encourages districts not to schedule significant school events on major religious holidays. Schools that plan around major religious holidays convey to all students that they are a meaningful part of their school communities and their religious traditions matter^[1]

Notes:

All Jewish, Islamic, and Bahá'í holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the first date shown

** These holidays (or dates within holidays) are designated non-work (observance) days.*

Some of these dates are not fixed to a calendar but based on the actual sighting of the moon and therefore there may be some variance by a day.

Date	Holiday or Observance	Religion	Notes
September 4, 2023 (Mon)	Labor Day		No School.
September 6-7, 2023 (Wed-Thurs)	Janmashtami	Hindu	
September 15, 2023 – September 17, 2023 (Fri-Sun)	Rosh Hashanah (New Year)	Jewish	Designated non-work day for observers.
September 24-25, 2023 (Sun-Mon)	*Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	Jewish	Designated non-work day for observers.
September 26-27, 2023 (Tues-Wed)	Mawlid-al-Nabi (birthday of Mohammad)	Islamic	
September 29 - October 6, 2023 (Fri-Fri)	*Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)	Jewish	No work permitted on Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Work is permitted on Oct. 2-6 with certain restrictions.
October 6-8, 2023 (Fri-Sun)	*Shmini Atzeret	Jewish	Designated non-work day for observers.
October 7-8, 2023 (Sat-Sun)	*Simchat Torah	Jewish	Designated non-work day for observers.
October 9, 2023 (Mon)	Indigenous Peoples' Day		
October 15-23, 2023 (Sun-week after following Mon)	Navaratri/Dassehra	Hindu	Celebrated at night.
November 11, 2023 (Sat)	Veteran's Day		No school Nov 10, 2023. (Fri)
November 12, 2023 (Sun)	Diwali	Hindu	
November 23, 2023 (Thurs)	Thanksgiving Day		No school Nov. 23-24, 2023. (Thurs-Fri)
December 7-15, 2023 (Thurs- week after following Fri)	Hanukkah (Chanukah)	Jewish	
December 25, 2023 (Mon)	Christmas Day	Christian	No school.
January 1, 2024 (Mon)	New Year's Day		No school.
January 7-8, 2024 (Sun-Mon)	Orthodox Christmas	Christian Orthodox	
January 15, 2024 (Mon)	Martin Luther King Day		No school.
February 10, 2024 (Sat)	Lunar New Year		

February 14, 2024 (Wed)	Ash Wednesday	Christian	
February 14, 2024 (Wed)	Beginning of Lent	Christian	Observed February 14-March 28, 2024.
February 19, 2024 (Mon)	President's Day		No school.
March 8, 2024 (Fri)	Maha Shivaratri	Hindu	
March 10, 2024 (Sun)	#Beginning of Ramadan	Islamic	Observed March 10-April 10, 2024. Dates not fixed. See note above.
March 23-24, 2024 (Sat-Mon)	Purim	Jewish	
March 25, 2024 (Mon)	Holi	Hindu	
March 29, 2024 (Fri)	Good Friday	Christian	
March 31, 2024 (Sun)	Easter	Christian	
April 6, 2024 (Sun)	Lailat Ul Qadr	Islamic	Date not fixed. See note above.
April 10, 2024 (Wed)	#Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)	Islamic	Observed March 10- April 9, 2024. Dates not fixed. See note above.
April 17, 2024 (Wed)	Ram Navami	Hindu	
April 22-30, 2024 (Mon-week after following Tues)	*Passover (Pesach)	Jewish	No work permitted on April 23-24 and April 29-30. Work is permitted only on April 25-26 and April 28 with certain restrictions.
May 3, 2024 (Fri)	Orthodox Good Friday	Christian Orthodox	
May 5, 2024 (Sun)	Orthodox Easter	Christian Orthodox	
May 27, 2024 (Mon)	Memorial Day		No school.
June 11-13, 2024 (Tues-Thurs)	*Shavuot	Jewish	Designated non-work day for observers.
June 16-17, 2024 (Sun-Mon)	#Eid al-Adha	Islamic	Date not fixed. See note above.
June 19, 2024 (Wed)	Juneteenth		No School.

<https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights/information-families-civil-rights-washington-schools/religion-schools/common-religious-and-us-public-holiday-calendars>

2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2023							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
8/29, 8/30, 8/31, 9/5	TRI Days	27	28	29	30	31	1 2
9/4	Holiday - Labor Day	3	4	5	6	7	8 9
9/6	First Day of School	10	11	12	13	14	15 16
		17	18	19	20	21	22 23
		24	25	26	27	28	29 30
OCTOBER 2023							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5	6 7
10/13	State In-Service Day/ TRI Day	8	9	10	11	12	13 14
		15	16	17	18	19	20 21
		22	23	24	25	26	27 28
		29	30	31			
NOVEMBER 2023							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4	
11/10	Holiday - Veterans Day	5	6	7	8	9	10 11
11/20 - 11/22	Elem P-T Conference (Varies by School)	12	13	14	15	16	17 18
11/23 - 11/24	Holiday - Thanksgiving	19	20	21	22	23	24 25
		26	27	28	29	30	
DECEMBER 2023							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2	
		3	4	5	6	7	8 9
		10	11	12	13	14	15 16
12/18 - 1/1	Winter Break	17	18	19	20	21	22 23
		24	25	26	27	28	29 30
		31					
JANUARY 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
1/1	Winter Break	1	2	3	4	5	6
1/15	Holiday - Martin Luther King Day	7	8	9	10	11	12 13
1/31	End of Semester 1	14	15	16	17	18	19 20
		21	22	23	24	25	26 27
		28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
2/1	Start of Semester 2				1	2	3
2/19	Holiday - Presidents Day	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
2/19 - 2/23	Mid-Winter Break	11	12	13	14	15	16 17
		18	19	20	21	22	23 24
		25	26	27	28	29	
MARCH 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2	
		3	4	5	6	7	8 9
		10	11	12	13	14	15 16
		17	18	19	20	21	22 23
		24	25	26	27	28	29 30
		31					
APRIL 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5	6
4/8 - 4/12	Spring Break	7	8	9	10	11	12 13
		14	15	16	17	18	19 20
		21	22	23	24	25	26 27
		28	29	30			
MAY 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4	
		5	6	7	8	9	10 11
		12	13	14	15	16	17 18
		19	20	21	22	23	24 25
5/27	Holiday - Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30	31
JUNE 2024							
Su	M	T	W	T	F	S	
						1	
6/19	Holiday - Juneteenth	2	3	4	5	6	7 8
6/21	Last Day of School for Students and Teachers	9	10	11	12	13	14 15
6/24	Emergency Closure Makeup Day (1 of 3)	16	17	18	19	20	21 22
6/25	Emergency Closure Makeup Day (2 of 3)	23	24	25	26	27	28 29
6/26	Emergency Closure Makeup Day (3 of 3)	30					



	Teachers	TRI	Student
August		4	0
September	18	0	18
October	21	1	21
November	19	0	19
December	11	0	11
January	21	0	21
February	16	0	16
March	21	0	21
April	17	0	17
May	22	0	22
June	14	0	14
Total	180	5	180

All Schools Closed
 TRI Days

Unless agreed upon with SEA, SPS must follow the formula specified in the CBA between SEA and SPS when creating the school year calendar. The formula provides the following rules:

- a. First day of school. The first Wednesday in September.
- b. State In-Service Day. As recognized by the State (typically the second Friday in October).
- c. Winter Break. At least ten weekdays, ending after New Year's Day. If New Year's Day falls or is observed on a Monday, students will return to school on the next day (Tuesday).
- d. Mid-Winter Break. President's Day and the following four workdays.
- e. Spring Break. Five days starting the second Monday in April.
- f. District-wide Emergency Closure Days. Three emergency closure make-up days will be scheduled. The scheduled make-up days will be, the day off between semesters, and the first two days following the last day of school in June. If additional emergency closure make-up days are required, they will be added to the end of the school year.
 - *For the 23-24 school year, SPS and SEA agreed to place the three emergency closure make-up days at the end of the school year and not have a non-school day between semesters.
- g. Holidays. Labor Day (when school begins before this day in September), Veteran's Day(November), Thanksgiving Day (November), the day after Thanksgiving (November), Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January), President's Day (February), Memorial Day (May), and Juneteenth (when the school year extends beyond this day in June).
- h. Contractual Days. The four workdays preceding the start of school, except the Friday before Labor Day.
- i. November Conference Days. Three consecutive days for conferences immediately preceding Thanksgiving Day.