

Resolution Supporting Local Control Of School Calendars

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Statutes give local boards of education powers of supervision and control of local school systems; and

WHEREAS, local control over establishing school calendars is an integral component of school system supervision and administration powers with which local boards of education have been vested; and

WHEREAS, State law has usurped local control by imposing a one-size-fits-all mandate on how school calendars are to be set; and

WHEREAS, by usurping local control, the current calendar law has created many barriers that prohibit K-12, community college, and university systems from working together to benefit students, economic development, and local communities; and

WHEREAS, by usurping local control, the current calendar law has led to the calendar for high schools, community colleges and universities being out of alignment by approximately two weeks, causing scheduling problems. College courses now begin before high school students complete January final exams; and

WHEREAS, by usurping local control, the current calendar law has created transportation and child nutrition conflicts for special innovative schools like the Surry Early College High School of Design; and

WHEREAS, by usurping local control, the current calendar law has created a situation where fall semester cannot be completed before the winter break, forcing exams to be administered after the break. This means that students get no break without assessments/assignments pending; and

WHEREAS, by usurping local control, the current calendar law has led to a decrease in the amount of instructional time students have prior to taking Advanced Placement tests; and

WHEREAS, the State-mandated calendar law strictly limits the number of days that can be scheduled as inclement weather days, increasing the likelihood of unpopular days like the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, spring break, and Saturdays being used as make-up days. In other cases, districts facing scheduling challenges due to inclement weather may shorten the number of days in the school year and increase the length of school days. But longer school days may negatively impact learning as children reach a point where they stop effectively absorbing the information they are being given; and

WHEREAS, it is well-documented through multiple studies that children experience learning loss during the summer months when they are away from the

classroom and not engaging in educational activities, a phenomenon known as summer learning loss and which has a disproportionate impact on low-income children; and

WHEREAS, long summer breaks can also negatively impact child nutrition, as low-income children who have access to regular meals at school through the free and reduced priced meal program may not have access to regular meals at home; and

WHEREAS, by mandating that every school calendar go into June, the current calendar law has forced retiring teachers who want to finish the school year to wait until July to retire, placing large burdens on the retirement system every July; and

WHEREAS, the schedule for fall athletics has not changed to coincide with the State-mandated school calendar. This means most schools have played two football games before school even begins; and

WHEREAS, restoring local control of school calendars will allow local boards of education to best meet the unique educational needs and school calendar preferences of the children and families within their communities while allowing for innovative experimental approaches to educating the students of our school system, such as the Surry Early College High School of Design and Meadowview Magnet Middle School.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Surry County Board of Education requests that local control over school calendars be returned to local boards of education.

Adopted by the Surry County Board of Education this third day of November, 2014.



Sexton Earlie Coe, Chairman, Surry County Board of Education