2021-2022 Proposed Academic Calendar for Elementary and High Schools

Chicago Public Schools

Calendar Recommendation

To ensure that students can begin the school year sooner than they typically would after a disrupted school year caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide students with more instructional time in advance of high-stakes exams such as AP, IB and SAT, we propose:

The adoption of a school calendar with a student start date of August 30 (Monday before Labor Day) instead of September 7.

Components of proposed school calendar:

- 178 full, actual student attendance days
- 10 professional development days for eligible employees
- 2 parent-teacher conference days,
- 8 paid staff holidays for eligible employees
- 10 paid vacation days for eligible employees

The calendar does not change the average number of daily student instructional minutes required.

Public Comments Summary

The Board posted the proposed Academic Calendar for two weeks for public comment and received close to 4,000 public comments.

Reasons - In Support	Reasons - Against
- Will help address unfinished learning sooner (suggested to return to Track E calendar to address unfinished learning) - Will provide students with additional preparation for AP, IB, SAT exams - Will better align with calendars of surrounding suburban school districts - Students/staff won't have to miss first day of school to observe Rosh Hashanah	- Notice too late, many families already have planned vacations (suggested to make change for SY22-23) - Students/staff need a "break" from school - One week shift wouldn't sufficiently address unfinished learning unless additional instructional time is also provided

Track E

CPS previously operated a [Track E](#) calendar for a subset of schools, with the remaining schools following a Track R calendar. The [Track R calendar](#) followed the same format that has been traditionally used for the last six years. The Track E calendar differed from the Track R calendar with an earlier student start date (mid-August) and a Fall, Winter, and Spring intersession. School ended mid-June.

In 2012-2013, 243 CPS schools followed the Track E calendar. The District eliminated the Track E calendar in 2013-2014 when it adopted a universal Academic Calendar for the district. The [2013-2014 calendar](#) included an earlier student start date than the Track R calendar, on the Monday before Labor Day, but did not include a Fall break. School ended the second week of June.

Track E

As an alternative calendar, Track E created both benefits and challenges.

Potential Benefits	Challenges
- Reduce length of the summer, thereby potentially minimizing "learning loss" - Students received more instructional time before a given test compared to the other tracks - Allows for longer breaks during the year, such as a two week Spring Break, allowing both teachers and families/students to re-energize	- The two calendar systems was disruptive for families with students at two different schools on different calendars - Track E created child care challenges for families during Fall, Winter and Spring Break - Track E created barriers for summer extra curricular participation - Track E created operational challenges for facilities, transportation and district-wide planning and communication

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Track E

Given the disruption caused by the pandemic, the district remains open to continuing to explore alternative calendars.

For sake of operational cohesion, and family planning needs, the district remains committed to maintaining one universal calendar.

Transitioning to an alternative calendar would require broad stakeholder consensus. Given the need to establish a calendar for the year ahead in a timely manner to allow for planning for the summer and year ahead, we do not have the time needed to adequately engage stakeholders in discussing the potential of such a large system change.