

Common Questions from Superintendents when Transitioning to a Balanced Calendar

Compiled in partnership with a stakeholder group consisting of Michigan superintendents and the Executive Director of the National Association for Year-Round Education

<p>What are the major components to consider when switching to a Balanced Calendar?</p>	<p>Stakeholder buy-in from staff, families, and community</p> <hr/> <p>Scanning for conflicts within the community such as a county fair, community festivals, local childcare facilities, etc.</p> <hr/> <p>Creating a task force to work on the calendar (intersessions, summer, etc.)</p> <hr/> <p>Analyzing district data to inform the need for a switch from traditional to balanced calendar</p> <hr/> <p>Consider the needs of: kitchen staff, custodians, facility cleaning, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, office staff, teaching staff, CTE programs, athletics/extra-curricular activities, etc.</p>
<p>What are the frequently asked questions around calendar design?</p>	<p>Can we take eight-weeks off in the summer, rather than six? (Yes)</p> <hr/> <p>Can we hold staff Professional Development during a scheduled student break? (Yes, the district could choose which days to hold PD during a break)</p> <hr/> <p>How many school days are in a Balanced Calendar? (a Balanced Calendar schedule still requires 180 days and 1098 hours of instruction)</p>
<p>What are the most frequently asked questions regarding implementation?</p>	<p>Can we implement a Balanced Calendar in less than 6-months? (Yes, however the average time is 6-18 months)</p> <hr/> <p>Do we need to file a waiver to start before Labor Day in Michigan? (Yes, however, this process is waived for 2020-21 school year in response to COVID-19 closures)</p> <hr/> <p>How will this impact summer vacation? (schedules allot for a minimum of 6 weeks of vacation; many students return August 1 for extra-curricular activities)</p>
<p>What are intersessions, and how do you explain the purpose of intersessions to families?</p>	<p>Intersessions are breaks during the school year that can also be used for social and/or academic learning experiences</p> <hr/> <p>Some intersessions are themed (ex: STEAM, Robotics, ARTS, Nature etc.)</p>
<p>What are suggestions when working with unions?</p>	<p>The calendar must be negotiated with the local union, and involving union leaders early in the process engages staff and can facilitate a smooth transition</p>
<p>What are some of the benefits of transitioning to a Balanced Calendar?</p>	<p>Balanced Calendar schools are able to clean their facilities during each intersession, resulting in less illness and increased attendance</p> <hr/> <p>Many Balanced Calendar schools have reported less "teacher burnout" and an increase in reflective teaching practices</p> <hr/> <p>Many Balanced Calendar schools have reported an increase in positive behaviors</p>