

The board believes that time is a variable in the educational process and that children may need different amounts of instructional time in order to fulfill the educational goals and objectives of the board. The board also recognizes that the school day and school year should be planned in such a manner as to facilitate student learning and to permit an accurate assessment of student achievement in scheduled testing periods.

A. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Interruptions of instructional time and time off task must be kept to a minimum. The principal is responsible for ensuring that instructional time is maintained and protected in the school schedule. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring optimal use of instructional time in his or her classes. School personnel are encouraged to seek creative means of reducing transitional time and scheduling non-instructional activities. A proposal for alternative scheduling of classes or other such strategies may be a part of a school improvement plan.

B. SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day may vary from school to school, if approved by the board of education, subject to the minimum instructional hours requirement established in Section D, below.

C. OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

Except for year-round schools or schools under a modified calendar, the opening date for students will not be before August 25, and the closing date for students will not be after June 10.

The school board may offer supplemental or additional educational programs or activities outside the adopted school calendar.

When allowed by law, the board will seek a waiver of the opening and/or closing dates from the State Board of Education if the board determines that a waiver is in the best interest of the students and the school system.

D. SCHOOL YEAR

The superintendent or designee shall appoint a committee, which includes members from a broad cross-section of the school staff and local community, to develop a school system calendar for the ensuing year. The school calendar shall be developed and presented to the board for approval no later than the regular April meeting.

The school calendar in all schools will be for 215 days and will provide for a minimum of

185 days and 1025 hours of instruction covering at least nine months. A school “month” is defined as 20 days of instruction. As funding permits, the board may pursue increasing the number of instructional hours or days, at least for those students who need more time to learn the curriculum.

If, upon request of the board, the State Board of Education grants a waiver of the 185 instructional day requirement to allow up to five of those days to be used as teacher workdays, the required number of instructional hours will be reduced by the equivalent of each instructional day waived.

Any calendar adopted by the board will be consistent with the following requirements.

1. Ten of the days on the calendar will be designated as annual vacation leave days.
2. Ten of the days on the calendar will be designated as holidays, including Veteran’s Day if it falls on a weekday.
3. The remaining 195 days are to be workdays for teachers. The total number of workdays for teachers employed for a 10-month term will not exceed 195 days. Those 195 days will be scheduled as follows:
 - a. One hundred and eighty-five days will be instructional days when students are present. These will be designated as “instructional” teacher workdays.
 - b. The remaining 10 days will be “flexible” teacher workdays and may be used by the board, superintendent or school principals for teacher workdays, additional instructional days or other lawful purposes. Each principal may schedule those days on the school calendar that have not been reserved by the board for other purposes. Before scheduling these days, each principal shall work with the school improvement team to determine the days to be scheduled and the purposes for which they should be scheduled.
 - c. Of the 10 “flexible” teacher workdays described in subsection D.3.b, the board will designate at least two days as days on which teachers may take accumulated vacation leave.
 - d. Further, the board may, due to school closings because of inclement weather or other reasons, use any of the “flexible” 10 days designated in subsection D.3.b above as make-up days for those instructional days that were missed. The board will give teachers at least 14 days' notice before requiring a teacher to work instead of taking vacation leave on any of these days. A teacher may elect to waive this notice requirement for one or more of these days.
 - e. Further, if it is unable to schedule student makeup days until after the

scheduled end of the school year, the school board may designate some of the “flexible” workdays described in subsection D.3.b above as additional make-up days after the last day of student attendance.

4. If the school calendar requires students to attend on Memorial Day, each principal shall ensure that the significance of Memorial Day is recognized in the school on that day. If students are not scheduled to attend school on Memorial Day, recognition of the significance of Memorial Day will be provided at another time as part of the citizenship curriculum (see policy 3530, Citizenship and Character Education).
5. If the school calendar requires students to attend school on September 17, which is Constitution and Citizenship Day, each principal shall ensure that the signing of the United States Constitution is commemorated in the school on that day. If students are not required to attend school on September 17, the principal shall ensure that Constitution and Citizenship Day is commemorated during the preceding or following week (see policy 3530, Citizenship and Character Education).

E. NON-TRADITIONAL CALENDAR

The board will consider authorizing a school to implement a non-traditional calendar provided the guidelines listed below are followed. The board will make the final decision regarding a non-traditional calendar for a school.

1. The principal and staff must work with the sited-based decision-making committee in developing a local school plan, which articulates the educational value of the non-traditional calendar. School officials must insure that the language used in the plan is clear and easy to understand and includes specifications of all details of the non-traditional calendar.
2. A communication plan, which includes a minimum of two community forums, must be designed.
3. Students who are in the non-traditional calendar school’s attendance area but who wish to attend a school with a traditional calendar may request to attend a traditional calendar school outside their attendance area. Just as is required with all out-of-attendance-area considerations, parents must provide transportation, and principals must give permission.
4. Students and staff must be surveyed in order to assess their support and concerns.
5. Parents must be surveyed to determine if they are in favor of a non-traditional calendar. Parents shall receive a survey for each student they have enrolled in the school considering non-traditional calendar. If at least 65% of the parent surveys are returned and 80% of those are in favor of non-traditional calendar, the plan

shall be submitted to the superintendent for final approval before the board considers final action.

Legal References: 36 U.S.C. 106(d); G.S. 115C-12(33), -36, -47, -84.2, -105.21(b)(2), -238.31, -288; State Board of Education Policy GCS-G-001

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Citizenship and Character Education (policy 3530)

Adopted: January 3, 2012