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Fairfax County School Board Work Session, Tuesday, January 31, 2023

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Place	Fairfax County School Board, Virginia
Length	1h 50m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=052uEdbH_uM
- Official School Board page (FCPS): https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/leadership/school-board

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-04. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:36] I'm gonna go ahead and certify closed quickly. In order to comply with section 2.2-3712 D of the Code of Virginia, it's necessary for the board to certify that since the Fairfax County School Board convened a closed meeting on January 31st, 2023, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting heard discussed or considered by the door by the board during the closed

[00:01:10] meeting is there a motion by Ms. Omesh seconded by Ms. Corbett Sanders all those in favor and that motion passes good afternoon everyone thanks for being with us this is work session number two of our calendar discussions and I think we're gonna go ahead and pass it on to staff to get started okay good afternoon

[00:01:36] Good afternoon, everyone. We're happy to be here again this week to talk about the calendar and to provide an update for board with regard to the survey that we shared with the entire community. We'll go through the data points today. I do want to thank the calendar development process. You see we have our executive director for communication and community relations, Helen Lloyd, at the table with us today, along with the chiefs. It's Marty and the chiefs and Helen. And so we're glad to do that.

[00:02:05] I also, before we get into the presentation, want to talk about some of the comments that you may be receiving from the community with regard to the calendar and some hopes in terms of outcomes for today. and so we'll be providing information about the staff survey and we're we're hopeful for dialogue across the table from board member to board member with regard to your thoughts on the calendar and then if if we get to a point where we can hone our efforts into perhaps focusing on a couple of the calendars

[00:02:43] because I think that with some of the data, there are some data points that board members might feel, well, we don't even want to consider those calendars. But if we get to the point of having some consensus on a particular grouping of calendars, if there are questions about dates on this particular calendar for the upcoming year or dates in the out years, because I know that there have been questions about certain dates in the out years,

[00:03:10] If there are questions about those dates, we can certainly work to make some changes to those calendars in the out years so that the board and the community find comfort around those days that might be further along. Going back to our methodology, we wanted to create calendars using the same methodology, the orange, green, blue, and purple, all using that same methodology and realize that there's room for tweaking.

[00:03:40] So with that, we can start the presentation for today. So this is an update on the data, and we know that we provided this link to board members so that you could also see what was happening in real time.

[00:03:57] I did happen to see a few board members actually in the data this morning as we were pulling some things together. But the data was provided, but we want to provide both the board and the community an update as to the results.

[00:04:12] You can see that we had close to 23,000 members of the community participate in the survey. That was as of noon today so we shut everything down. The posting was a bit later today than we normally do for calendar because we wanted to provide as much real-time information as possible. So again kudos to folks on my team and Helen's team for pulling this presentation together in record time to give you and the community an update on those numbers.

[00:04:41] the next slide shows a breakdown in terms of our multilingual community who provided feedback you can see there with regard to the overall numbers that about one percent of our respondents were uh spanish-speaking you can see that the breakdowns in for our arabic chinese korean urdu and vietnamese uh so to to give the board in the community the understanding that we did do outreach to all of our communities and received uh input and this is uh input that we can consider as part of the entire process. Next slide. You can also see the primary role of those who responded to

[00:05:17] the survey that 67 percent of those who responded close to 68 percent were parents, 10 percent close to 11 percent were students, 21 percent were employees, and then we had small numbers for community members or those who identified themselves as others. And then we also going back to the previous slide we also did the breakdowns for our multilingual participants and again as you can see with other data the most of our respondents were parents with then

[00:05:51] employees and students bringing up the rear next slide it's important to share how we informed our communities about this work so how did we spread the word we had information on our

fcps website information went out in our newsletters our employee news we did direct emails and text messages I got my text message to fill out the survey myself and I did fill out the survey myself as an employee we did direct email to students we had social media we provided information in our school board

[00:06:28] toolkits and newsletters and I received those tool those school board newsletters and saw how all of you provided that input to the community to make sure that you sign up a few were right there right before the wire and saying the survey closed today at 1 o'clock please sign up and so we appreciate those efforts of course we put information in our school communicator toolkits our school newsletters and then we translated version of all of our content so in a very quick turnaround we were able to get a good number of individuals responding to our survey and it went out in a variety of venues across the

[00:07:07] system. So what are some key and major takeaways from the data? And again, as I said, that you have access to the numbers and some of the slides that we're going to talk about today, but I wanted to give you some key takeaways with regard to the questions that we asked in terms of what works best to try to keep it in the positive and not the what doesn't work, but what works best. So if you look at the data that we're going to talk about, in terms of start date, the calendar that worked the best for our overall community was the green calendar in terms of what works best, and that was the

[00:07:43] calendar that had the one week before Labor Day start. There are some other things that are involved with the green calendar, but in terms of what worked best, the green calendar worked best for start date. With regard to winter break, what worked best, the blue and the purple calendars were the calendars with the strongest response in terms of working best for all of our communities. And you'll note that those blue and purple calendars were the calendars with full two-week winter breaks and they're actually 11-day winter breaks in this coming calendar. The next question was around the instructional week and what worked

[00:08:22] best for our communities with regard to instructional week. The answers were pretty well balanced across all calendars but the purple calendar did edge out the response rate a bit more in terms of what works best. In terms of end date, the responses for what worked best were pretty close with our orange and purple calendars with regard to the last day of school. And in terms of our instructional days where we talk about the consistency of instructional

[00:08:55] days, the answers were pretty balanced across all calendars with the blue calendar edging out just a bit. Some other major takeaways, when we look at what our respondents were most concerned about as they answered based on the numbers, they were most concerned about the start date and the length of winter break. Those were the drivers for this particular survey, it seems, where 85 percent of our respondents responded to these questions.

[00:09:29] We noted then that our respondents for this survey were least concerned with the number of instructional days and instructional weeks, where we noted that almost half of the respondents chose not to respond to that particular question. So again, the major drivers for -- based on the responses to this survey were start date and the length of the winter break.

[00:09:56] We can take a look at the data per calendar option. Again, we've provided the data and we've provided -- there are about 34 slides on this presentation that we're not going to go through all 34 slides. We did provide those major takeaways, but we do want to go through just a few of these slides to show the community overall what the responses were with the numbers with that response rate.

[00:10:19] So we can go to the next slide. To show again, it just reinforces what I shared in some of the highlight slides with regard to start date. The major driver on this particular calendar was the length of the winter break where we we saw that close to 16,000 of our respondents overall felt that that worked for them.

[00:10:40] The number of instructional weeks, again, was a much smaller take, and that the end date on this calendar, where close to 13,000 respondents felt that that worked well for them. Again, with instructional days, we see about 11,000, but you can see the major drivers for this response group.

[00:10:59] And it's important to note that the gray are the no response to that particular question. Next calendar, next slide. You can see here the orange calendar, which is the less than two week winter break. I'll go with that length of winter break where we were talking in the positive about the highlights, but you can clearly see there that 13,600 of our respondents felt that the length of the winter break on the orange calendar did not work for them. You'll note though that the end date seemingly worked for folks on this

[00:11:35] particular calendar and it's important to look at these charts when we're as we're providing information for the board as you're considering that feedback from the community the more red we see shows those are the categories that did not work for our respondents the more blue where we see where things did work and more gray they just they didn't really have a particular opinion on that particular question the next slide with the green calendar again you could see that there were a few items that did not work for

[00:12:12] individuals with the green calendar the length of the winter break again that was the less than two week winter break and the end date and if you remember with one week prior to Labor Day start, that did push the end date well into the third week of June. And so you can see that many of our respondents felt that the end date did not work for them on this particular calendar. But many felt that the start date with that one week before Labor Day worked for them in this particular calendar. And again, with regard to number of

[00:12:49] instructional days. It was about 50% there for those who didn't feel that that was important for them on this particular calendar. And then the last calendar that we'll show here for the overall responses is the purple calendar. As a reminder, the purple calendar is the calendar that is the less than 180 days for students. It's 177 days. And you can see there that the length of the winter break works well for our respondents, as well as the end date working well for our respondents. And the start date was a positive on this calendar, but we did have other calendars

[00:13:26] where, again, they felt that the start date perhaps worked better for them. And we wouldn't make any recommendations on the calendars based on the data that we've seen, but if you're looking at positives and calendars where we see less red, we can share with the board and the community that our blue and purple calendars were the calendars where individuals in our community felt that the options that we provided worked better for them and didn't work against them as a family, staff member, or student.

[00:14:00] And with that, we have provided data, and again, this is as of noon today. Our responses were still open, and as I had stepped out to work with the team to pull this presentation together we noted that the information was still coming in live and if that is up now I'm sure that the information is still coming in and if we do leave this open we will provide the board with the most up-to-date information that we

have prior to the vote but what we have noted is that from the initial responses to the responses today the themes have

[00:14:39] remained the same. So as we open the calendar last week or open the survey last week, we noted the response rates and we have maintained those same themes throughout this entire week that the survey has been open. So I'm not anticipating that there would be a major sea change in looking at a particular calendar or looking at these numbers because those numbers and the percentages have remained consistent. And with that I know that there are perhaps questions about the data and questions about other aspects of the calendar and the team we're ready to answer questions and also

[00:15:17] facilitate the conversation among board members. I also thank you Mr. Smith. One of the things that staff are really hopeful to have as a result of the conversation this afternoon is a narrowing of the calendar model from which to really sort of plan for an upcoming potential vote so the degree to which as a board you could narrow either eliminate some of the options or tighten up kind of the the range that staff will work on moving forward i think would be helpful thank you

[00:15:52] thank you dr reed um dr anderson thank you so much thank you for this information it was very helpful to have this survey i do want to say that it was good to be able to get some feedback but i would be remiss if i didn't share that i have gotten a good number of feedback that the survey was not enough like there was no space for people who didn't feel as if any of the options would work for them to articulate that because it was not an open-ended component can you speak to that a little bit so that the community can understand because those are the questions i've

[00:16:30] been receiving all the way through this morning why was there not an open-ended component to the survey or maybe the opportunity to introduce something new so we had discussions about how we were going to garner information or garner feedback from the community we know that in the past we have done straight votes with calendars and we seemingly get 50 for one calendar and 50 percent for another and so we didn't want to do anything with regard to

[00:17:02] prioritization or or ranking of the calendars and with regard to the the open-endedness as we thought about the turnaround time as we thought about the the amount of analysis that goes into open-ended questions and looking for themes we felt that by choosing these five areas to get a sense of what worked and what didn't would be enough to to provide some feedback to the board about the at least areas in the calendars that the community felt strongest about and i wouldn't say substitute what you have

[00:17:39] i would just say supplement what was there because some people felt that it was a forced choice like they couldn't really move um so having said that i am going to move on from that point i just want to make sure that you know some of those questions i'm going to be sending in your direction that i've been getting um i'm glad to hear from you that there is some opportunity to do some tweaks in the out years i even noticed such in the monday letter and i think no matter where we land that's going to be a conversation that i'm going to want to have as well um if we could go back to the survey a little bit i would love to know how did you or are they each unique submissions or can

[00:18:17] individuals complete more than one survey so we um individuals could complete more than one survey if they chose to. We've been asking them not to and asking people just to submit one response.

[00:18:37] I mean, the way that we've been sending them out is through a direct email and direct text to each family member only, and we sent that with the aim of getting just one response from that member.

That said, we could have some duplicates here. What I will say, and what I would like to talk to you a little bit is the fact that we do have and it's not scientifically calculated because of the quick turnaround but we do have a margin of error for each of these that is within a good margin of error that gives us some reliability for this data so even if we do have some people

[00:19:17] who might have completed it a couple of times or more we know that the um out of the families we had a less than one percent plus minus margin of error for the staff we had around a one percent margin of error and for the student data we had around a 2% plus minus margin of error which gives us at least some element of reliability even if we may have some some people have committed over completed it more than once not to bore everybody in the room but I would love for you to speak a little bit more about that methodology to which you arrive at that margin of error so it is

[00:19:54] a calculation that is highly complex we use an online calculator when we need to turn it around quickly. You can submit your piece of information that you have in and then it will turn it around and will give you that calculation pretty quickly. My team can provide some more data on that if you need in the Monday letter to give you much more of a detailed outline of how we do that. What I will say is that we are not ORSI. When ORSI calculates it, they will calculate it to a much greater level and a much deeper analysis.

[00:20:26] For us, at this moment in time when we were looking for an idea of roughly how accurate and if we could possibly trust the data that we collected in this feedback form, we were looking at some element of roughly where did our margin of error fall. Okay, you said a lot there, Ellen, but I'm not sure if you addressed my question at all.

[00:20:44] I would love a follow-up in terms of having that reliability because when you're sharing that there's opportunity to provide more than one submission, which I knew, by the way, because I'm a parent. I got it. when I saw that it said submit another response, I'm like, well, this is an issue.

[00:20:59] I could sit there and submit multiple responses. That does not lead me to believe that it's reliable data. It could have a conflating impact on a fewer set of individuals than we would like. I mean, on its face, this number's great, but I would love to know how many of those duplicates that we have.

[00:21:18] I'm gonna jump into the rest of my time here. I would love to hear from you, Marty, as you have been going through this data. there anything just from the feedback that you've received that has knocked one of these out of contention so in in terms of when we developed the original calendars we knew that the the green calendar would be one of those that might be difficult and i believe i shared last week when we looked at the that end date of the year and it's been our uh our efforts have been focused on

[00:21:52] of course, instructional time, the length of instruction for students, the length of time that we provide for students with regard to instruction. And then we know that the end date has been one of those areas that people, you know, the further you push it out, it has an impact on families and employees. And so that would possibly be a calendar that the board would not want to consider. So given the feedback that you had regarding the winter break, because that seems to still be strong people want the 10 days and the date that by which school will end it seems as if the green calendar doesn't seem to be working a lot for our community who responded to this data

[00:22:31] that yes that goes back to the slides where i highlighted if you see a lot of red then that would be an area that perhaps wasn't working for our respondents well i will tell you myself personally when i

did my little thing outside of the community feedback there were two calendars that I landed on, and I'll share the reasons. Hopefully I'll have time to do that. It was actually the blue calendar and the orange calendar. The way that I wanted to have as late of a start date as possible, I wanted to have as early of an end date as possible in the 10-day winter break, because I knew that has been very important to our community

[00:23:11] in the years past, as many full-day weeks as possible, and some sort of parity across the quarters. One of them, I'll give you an example that gave me a lot of trouble with the purple calendar. In the third year, one quarter was 39 days, one quarter is 49 days. We all know how teachers plan. And I would have been, I think, okay, if the longer quarter was the first quarter because we know what happens in the first few days of school, particularly with all the diagnostic.

[00:23:39] But when we have the last quarter being so long and the first quarter being so short when there's much to be done because i know there's a lot of content to um cover those gave me a little bit of heartburn thank you so so if i could make a general response to to your selections and thank you for the input that's very helpful to us and that's the kind of input that we're looking for with regard to those out years as you look at that differentiation between the the quarters if those were if those are issues uh for the board to consider and would like staff to consider we

[00:24:14] can certainly go back and take a another look at those dates in the out years again today is to help us narrow and then once we narrow if there are issues with some of those out your calendars we can certainly make adjustments and consider adjustments to better fit the the need of the board in the community we wanted to use that same methodology so that we didn't bring any judgment into the calendar development process with regard to those individual calendars so if there are are issues in the out years, we can always take another look at those for the calendars that you

[00:24:45] choose. Okay, thank you. I'll go back if possible. Mr. Frisch. Thank you. First, I'll start by saying I want a three-year calendar, so that's where I start. My preference is orange or purple. Currently, I have concerns about both. Is it possible to get the data broken down by Magisterial District sometime in the next couple days? I'd love to know what percentage of Providence District makes up this overall number. I love to follow up with Helen's team because I'm not sure if we asked that

[00:25:23] in the school. With the school level data I could run the numbers myself. Yeah I think we might be able to provide that. Let me take it back to my team and see what we can provide for you and maybe provide an update in your Monday letter as well. Great. The margin of error conversation is a pleasant surprise and I'll look forward to seeing more about how we arrive there. So we've now talked about what students want what staff want and what um parents want um what is educationally best for students of what is the impact of early start and early stop dates on student academic

[00:26:03] performance if any i you know i think some of this is a little bit subjective in terms of you know what people would prefer um i do think the later that you go into the end of the school year the more difficult it is we hear that repeatedly from teachers that the longer we go into June the more difficult it is to you know keep students focused on learning so I think that's one of the biggest factors in terms of like the number of days per quarter we can always adjust for that and balance those out better or we can make adjustments within the schedule to better

[00:26:39] accommodate for that so I think really the end date is probably the biggest factor in terms of the student experience. What about the length of winter break? We keep framing this as two weeks versus

eight days. It's actually 12 days or 16 to 18 days if you count in the weekends. So it's a choice between 12 days in these shorter versions. Every calendar that's shorter has 12 days, including weekends. Every calendar that is longer with the longer break has 16 to 18 consecutive days off. What is the impact academically on the length of a winter break? I mean, again, And I don't think there's anything like a completely definitive or conclusive response

[00:27:18] to that. I think the longer winter break is preferable to many families. We've seen that in the survey data. It's often preferable to teachers as well to have that break. So when people are fresh, renewed, and come back with energy, I think that's always a positive.

[00:27:37] But at the same time, we know the more continuity that you can have, the better that that is for the teaching and learning experience as well so I mean I just don't think there's a conclusive answer to that one okay Mr. Frisch I'd like to add a comment about the for those students who are taking comprehensive AP and IB exams the ability to start school a little earlier is a benefit because you would increase the number of days of instruction prior to what are nationally identified dates I'm glad you brought up AP and IB because all of the calendars

[00:28:12] don't include time for IB exams. This year the IB exam is on Friday May 5th for a number of subjects and if proof is in the past it's probably the second Friday of May which is currently listed as a professional work day and student holiday. How do we address that? No thank you for that question too. So we don't have the IB testing schedule yet. We won't get that for a while.

[00:28:37] That's always been a challenge when we create our calendars. There is that potential for the day that you signaled to be a testing date. We actually called the International Baccalaureate Office, the headquarters, and spoke to the president, as well as their testing coordinator, and expressed some concerns about the testing schedule.

[00:28:56] We let them know what our possible holidays were gonna be in terms of what work we were doing in the calendar. They said that they would definitely take that information into consideration because we are a large site for IB. And, you know, that I think was positive, but they can't guarantee that they would adjust around that date.

[00:29:16] So if we do adopt the calendar, that might be one of those minor tweaks that we want to make just to be, you know, making sure that we're safe because we don't know and we won't be able to know. And we don't have flexibility on the date. They choose it, we do it. They do, and that's the problem with IB is because it's, you know, around, it's an international assessment.

[00:29:36] They don't allow for make-ups the way that AP does, so it is a little bit different. And this year we've got 340 students at Marshall High School taking the exam. In terms of general feelings about orange and purple, orange I like because of the consistency, the increase in five-day weeks.

[00:29:55] I think for most of the calendars it's like an increase of 10% five-day weeks. For one of them it's an increase of 16% or 17% on five-day weeks. Purple I like because it has a comparable increase in five-day weeks. But I am hopeful that as these conversations continue, that maybe we can find extra days to add to the purple calendar to flesh out the number of academic days so that it's equal to the other calendars.

[00:30:25] The other thing I would say is that perhaps we could spend some attention on the professional workdays so that they are scheduled in such a way, even if it doesn't align with the quarter properly, that they are not like you're back in school, then it's a professional workday, then you're back and then it's a

professional workday, that we're not doing it, you know, we're not pushing people into the beginning of another week at the end of the school year because of how we've staggered them, that we are more mindful to that.

[00:30:50] think that would be a big improvement over all the calendars but i get the sense from colleagues that most people are in the orange and purple world so we'll see what that ends up being um other um questions um i guess i'll go for a go back because i've lost my train of thought i appreciate it all right ms cohen followed by ms kohar sanders thank you um before i knew we were going to do another survey i started my own so i apologize for soliciting people a couple times

[00:31:30] but i did get 333 responses which in the springfield district is shockingly not too shabby i got 85 of guardians or caregivers nine percent of staff one and a half percent were community members and four percent were students um but from 72 schools uh were the these if the guardians or caregivers what center school do your children attend and i had a response from 72 of those and i just want to highlight for a couple people some places that maybe sometimes

[00:32:03] we don't hear from um bull run early childhood resource center cedar lane school dunloring early childhood resource center um i also got key center i got mountain view high school pemmett hills um quanda road so um i was really grateful that families who sometimes i think feel a little bit like they get left out of the mix responded um so thanks to that guardians and caregivers i appreciate it um of that definitely purple and blue were most attractive to springfield

[00:32:43] district folks um with a few caveats though um and so i guess i would appreciate some attention to these particular areas one that i'm continuing to hear and this may be a no-go among my colleagues but i am throwing it out to you that i've had several principals and a lot of family members come back to me about veterans day and as somebody who was very proud to second that amendment with or second that agreement with Ms. Corbett Sanders, I was really surprised to hear it,

[00:33:14] but their feedback was they still love to do the Veterans Day stuff, and they feel like it's really important for their kids. So what they wind up doing is then instead of the Veterans Day, they do it the day before. And so now they lose another instructional day, even though I would consider that an instructional quality material.

[00:33:36] But they felt like they really lost something that was really valuable to their community. A few of my schools did their Thanksgiving meals with their lunch with their families on that day because they all came in, my high military population school. So I'm just throwing that out for consideration. I would be very interested to hear from colleagues if you think that's a no-go.

[00:33:56] The other was in trying to bring back some consistency, like people asked about getting rid of the 30th and 31st as professional work days. And instead, bringing back, pushing the quarter back to ending on November 3rd and putting a workday on the 6th so that we had what we used to always have, which was the two days that were around Election Day.

[00:34:21] That's when parent-teacher conferences normally happened. And so that was an ask from my community. I have to get a go back, too. Sorry. Thank you. Ruth Sanders. Yes, thank you.

[00:34:37] And thank you for your hard work on this. I know it's tough to have a turnaround as quickly as you all have done on this one. I have a couple of questions. One is the, I'm glad you mentioned the AP IB schedule, because I did look on the websites and was able to find their calendar window.

[00:34:57] And so I do have concerns about overlap there. And I think when we make the calendar, we have to be very explicit in calendar windows, because kids may take one set of IB courses at Marshall and a different set at Edison.

[00:35:16] So we just need to be aware of all of them. Similarly with the AP, which does have more flexibility with makeup, but there is a concern that you take the original options anymore.

[00:35:36] Additionally, I think it's really important to, I still do prefer the orange, the orange or blue, but in the third year, the orange is a problem at the winter break and so i think looking at some adjustments there it would be important and then i have a more of a philosophy question i think is the best way of putting it we have different numbers of professional work days last year we spent a lot of time talking about the importance of professional development and having a professional development plan

[00:36:11] so it would be really helpful for us as we make these decisions to understand that what each of these days example if um february 1st is only going to be for elementary school science or you know whatever it is so we have a better understanding and our staff will have a better understanding of how they can use some of these days for their much needed planning time but we keep hearing consistently so um i do expect that i will probably have to have a go back but in

[00:36:51] looking at the orange calendar it achieves much of what you've talked about uh dr presidio of having enough seat time it also has more consistency in other ones and it gets out earlier and so i think all of those are really important i appreciate my colleague mr frisch's focus on we're talking about 12 days off we're not talking about just one week off and that is a substantial amount of time at the winter break if that allows us the flexibility elsewhere and i would really

[00:37:31] like to see something working with uh miss cohen about the importance of clustering these so that we don't have all these two and three day work weeks comments on any of that i would definitely like to provide you just with the process that we've used in the past on designating the 15 days so what normally happens is that the calendar is proposed the board votes on it then my shop

[00:38:04] ople proposes designation of pw days stw sp and sd days right and that professional work days teacher work days well once it's approved by the calendar by the board yes it's 15 days and we've added three additional days 15 days of professional development days or professional work days excuse

[00:38:37] Yeah and then as Dr. King was suggesting those are then allocated out and we've been doing it pretty consistently since I've been here for 11 years. Three of those days are division-directed professional days and then we have a set number of school-directed professional development days so that's time for schools to work on their school improvement plans to do that professional learning around their goals and in their particular building and And then the rest of those days are for teacher, they're teacher-directed days.

[00:39:10] That's for individual team planning, as well as conferences can be built into some of those days as well. So that's typically how we've done it. Now, this year, as you mentioned, we have the purple calendar, which has an additional three days of professional learning built in.

[00:39:26] And we did that to really judge in terms of, you know, our stakeholder interest in adding additional professional development time for teachers. Because we know that particularly post-pandemic, we've added a lot of additional responsibilities for teachers to consider. If you just think about the science

of reading work that we're doing at the elementary level, for example, it's a lot of new practices and there's a lot of time that's needed really to address some of those areas.

[00:39:48] The same thing being true with some of the work that we're doing in our special education enhancement plan with changes to inclusion practices as well as a lot of other enhancement areas. so we wanted to have an opportunity to to really gauge stakeholder interest in a calendar that would have some additional professional work days the downside of that calendar of course is you get those professional work days at the expense of three fewer instructional days and we have to

[00:40:11] use the 990 hour requirement minimum yeah thank you um we do have an update on um your earlier question i believe dr anerson was your question helen do you want to explain yes that's correct so we now have an update on the number of duplicate emails so we have had 698

[00:40:44] duplicate emails we're now at almost close to 24,000 responses and I just want to remind people as well that family members can obviously share an email address particularly if you have a student you might submit one as a student as well as I'm submitting one as a parent for example I know that my kids when they're younger did not have their own email address for example and um and then of course we do have ones in the form that may not be uh fully verified so but that is that is as close we're going to get to the duplicate number which we estimate at 698 right now thank

[00:41:21] you uh miss mclaughlin and then miss amesh so um first of all what was the percentage of responses that we got initially on the calendar from our employees versus family parent breakdown because this one has the 68% parents. I want to know what was the ratio within the first survey we did

[00:41:51] earlier. I'm looking up the data here on the slide and I'm just trying to get to the exact answer because we have it broken out by question but we don't have it broken out overall. I thought

[00:42:26] we knew in general what was the population pool of how many employees did we hear from in the initial survey, how many parents and families we heard from and how many kids. The reason I bring that up is because 68% parents, Dr. Reed, my concern is in my years, I typically see a better balance between the number of employees that we've heard from versus the number of parents. This is very heavily parents, which, I mean, they're greatly impacted, so I'm thrilled. But I am concerned, as I shared with you and some of my colleagues,

[00:43:05] That a one-week window to ask people's feedback on these calendars is wholly insufficient. Dr. Reed, you'd put in your message to us that we would see how the responses came in and decide if this would be the dipstick, and then allow for the survey to continue on through February 6th.

[00:43:23] And yet Mr. Smith announced that it's already been shut down. Well, it's been paused. I believe it's been reopened. It was paused to take the report for the board, both for last night and for today, but Helen did you have an ad you wanted to make?

[00:43:40] Yeah, that is correct. So we just need to pause it so that we can take a snapshot of the data so that we can share it with you now. We then -- it's still open, it's still running, we will still collate that data for you and we'll keep it going until February the 6th, if that's what the board would like.

[00:43:56] We're more than happy to, to make sure that we still continue to see that trend data. What we are seeing is a trend, though, and the trend is also reflective of the original survey data that we did a few weeks ago. So I was actually able to pull it up.

[00:44:11] It's on slide 15 of our survey responses, and we can see that we had an employer response rate of 48 percent. We had a family response rate of 21 percent and a student response rate of 25 percent.

[00:44:27] So again, Dr. Reed, I will say when only 10% of the 24,000 are employees, that means we have very few employees. The survey results, I believe, were 21% were employees. Right.

[00:44:42] Well, 21% of 24,000 is a lot smaller number than 48% of our total employees responded. I can send another link to employees. I would just say to my colleagues, I hope you'll support directing Dr. Reed to go ahead and you know allow for the survey to continue through Monday and then we can all send communications out because I am particularly concerned that our employees voices are not here I understand there's trend and so with that trend I will say I have not heard us when we're trying to help people

[00:45:21] understand terminology winter break is the number of days of instruction that are off so we've been talking about ten days then we were talking about eight days. So I totally appreciate what Mr. Frisch is saying, but we could then apply that to how we talk about spring break. We need to keep terminology consistent so everybody understands what we're talking about. Do you want to shorten winter break by two days or not? What we are seeing consistently is people do not want it shortened. We are a representative body, so at some point we have to realize it's not where we might individually feel about this impact. In general, I have

[00:46:01] concerns that we are continuing to hear from our families that unlike the other jurisdictions we are starting earlier we are ending later we have more disrupted weeks of instruction you know families are and employees are saying it's one thing to take a week off at winter break or two weeks off and they either get childcare coverage at a week at a time but the one-off days are presenting a problem and I'll need to go back because I'm concerned about our non-12-month employee impact too. Ms. Amesh? Thank you. So just on the, and thank you to staff for

[00:46:40] your work on this. I guess on the winter break piece, and I'd like to hear staff correct me if I'm wrong, the problem with this is, and we mentioned, I know I mentioned this, Laura Jane mentioned this in our two by twos, but the way we ask the question doesn't exactly indicate like where, which of those two levers we should be pulling because in the calendars we have a two week winter break you don't exactly start right so when we look at when the preference of people of when to start they don't want us starting earlier but then they also want the two week winter break and that's just not an option regardless right so where does that leave us

[00:47:18] so you're right that it's it's not an option by calendar because we were trying to get away from that ranking or that voting for I like this calendar better than the other calendar when looking for those themes and so we can clearly see that the theme of uh the two week uh the 16 days versus the 12 days is a um would be an approach that our community felt stronger about having the two week working better for them right so i think colleagues we just have to be clear like people

[00:47:53] preferred one week less in the beginning one week less in the end and a longer winter break so and And that's impossible, so we're just going to have to balance out the various needs. The second thing, I guess I'd be remiss not to mention primary day, which I know we've taken before but won't be feasible this time, I suppose.

[00:48:13] Is it possible to make that an O day so that at least there's community awareness around the primary, should we choose the calendars where school is on that day? We can certainly consider anything that the board would want us to consider, yes.

[00:48:31] Okay. Colleagues, I think that might be a way of getting at our goal, at least a little bit closer, since we're not able to take it off this time, that it be something the community is aware of and that kids, you know, there's an educational component to that. Can I clarify again, you're talking about the primary day, the presidential primary.

[00:48:51] Okay, I'm hearing all kinds of dates now. I found June 17th, but. I believe we already have the primary day off on our calendars. but ours isn't right yeah exactly so there is a calendar where we have school on that day right yeah the green option so if the green option is chosen can we make that an O day for the community's awareness it's not a religious and cultural observance in terms of an O day but we

[00:49:30] could look at some other designation just having it as a day off okay yeah I just want to make sure that it's it's labeled that way I guess and that there's awareness and obviously there are lots of

[00:49:47] bodies coming in and out of buildings as well that day, right? So, okay. So I guess I lean towards the options that allow us to have that as a holiday. But in the same way that we have these slides where it starts, ends, winter break instructional days, can you outline for me across the options how many contract days hourly employees have? Don't run my time. Okay. So in the same way your slides have starts, ends, winter break instructional days, can you outline for me for the various calendars

[00:50:25] how many contract days hourly employees will have for each of these the contract days uh lengths don't change with any of the calendars so all of our employees uh if you have 195 day contract which is our teacher contract you work your contracted days those who have uh hourly oh for our hourly contract employees uh their work days aren't changed the number of contracted days aren't changed by any of these calendars paid days they're the same the paid days are the same so The paid days are the same for all of our employees on these calendars.

[00:51:04] Some of the questions that we've received in the past are around where we provide those paid non-work days for employees and what we've noted is that most of those issues occur around that full two week winter break and when we went to the full two week winter break there were longer stretches of time where those employees weren't paid and so we had to use many of those days to balance that time out.

[00:51:30] When you have the less than two week winter break, then you don't have to worry about balancing that time out as much and you can spread those days out in other places in the calendar. But the number of days are the same on all of our calendars. - Including paid non-work days?

[00:51:48] - Yes, that's consistent by regulation. That's consistent throughout. Again, our contracted folks, contracted hourly folks had questions about the gaps, when we could provide those paid non-workdays.

[00:52:04] And so you get a bigger bang for your buck with the paid non-workday if you actually are working some days that week. Okay. And so I guess in your assessment, you're saying the longer winter break has more disruption in that?

[00:52:19] For those employees, yes. Okay. You know, colleagues, that's another consideration. I think for our hourly employees, the longer winter break is a struggle. And I've certainly heard that loud and clear

from at least our bus drivers, so something to keep in mind.

[00:52:37] Planning time, I guess I want to just hear thoughts around how we might address that creatively if we've, you know, if we have any ideas, or I guess we're just going to stick to where we are. Well, there's a couple different ways to kind of think about the planning time.

[00:52:54] And from the calendar perspective that we're talking about here, it would be how many days do we have built into the calendar that would be teacher-directed, right? So we talked about the difference between school-directed, division-directed, and teacher-directed days. So we've typically had three division-directed days, four school-directed days, and eight teacher-directed days.

[00:53:17] So that's what we have in the first three calendar options, blue, green, and orange. In purple, we have three additional professional workdays that we would need to make a decision how many of those should be designated as teacher directed school directed or division directed so we haven't made that determination yet and we wouldn't do that unless we adopted the purple calendar so that's the best way really when we think about the calendar to think about the implications for a teacher planning time so you're saying because a teacher directed day the teacher has the ability to really make decisions about how that time is used okay so

[00:53:54] you're saying three additional days are reflected in the purple one in the purple calendar that's right. And in previous years, were they 15 total? Okay, I guess I heard an idea in the community where, and I know I shared this previously, just throwing it out for thoughts here, where perhaps like for some of the student holidays, religious and cultural observances, it's unlikely that staff will require all of those days. So perhaps we can use, let's say, two of them of the teacher's

[00:54:27] choice to be teacher-directed planning days, you know? So, you know, one teacher probably isn't celebrating three or four different communities as observances, so they can choose two of those days to designate as teacher-directed planning days, so that then we're at a total of 17 rather than 15. Is that a possibility? It seems like that would be adding more days to the teacher contract. I mean, they would be the same days that are designated as holidays, right? So you're

[00:55:07] saying making those work days is adding days, right? Because the contract is not inclusive of holidays normally? So when we talk about our less than 12-month employees and we talk about holidays, there are members of the community who feel like we're giving teachers additional days off.

[00:55:29] And so it goes back to that conversation of the number of contracted days. So if it's a blue day, any blue day on that particular calendar that a teacher has off, it's not a paid day off for that teacher. It's simply a day off for the less than 12 month employee because we make it up by ensuring that they work the number of days that their contract states. So it's not a paid day off for individuals if you're a less than 12 month employee. Conversely, for our 12 month employees, we do have paid holidays that we provide to our 12 month employees. And so if it's a day off,

[00:56:05] they are essentially paid for that day off. But it's different for our less than 12 month employees. Okay, I can see the complication there. I know that's my time. I'll take a go back. Thank you. Mr. Koufax, followed by Ms. Marin. Thank you. And thank you for staff for your continual work on this. And to write until we take the vote, I'm certain. So a couple things I think are emerging from the continual test, the continue asking of our communities. And that is the majority of

[00:56:42] teachers parents and children do support um the current two weeks off um i appreciated that as a parent and i think that was a promise to our teachers as well as i believe families are wholeheartedly embracing it because it provides for both a mental health and emotional well-being break during that time as well as to mention not to mention all of the family visits and things that occur during that time so for me um well i'll get to that but i also we need to ensure that all calendars have the ib testing schedule and that there isn't a professional development

[00:57:21] during that time because there is no way for a lot of our ib schools are our schools um that are have higher needs and need wraparound services so that would not be easy for some of these kids to get to their testing windows if they were if it was a professional development day and they would not have bus service things like that um so where are where am i listening to the public um i think their support is there for the blue or purple calendars and as i look at those over a three year period i see really the only difference between blue and purple is the addition of

[00:58:00] additional professional work days in the purple calendars and as i go through those i went through all of them. They come during different times. Next year's are in January, February, and year-end. In 2020, 24-25, they're in February, April, year-end. And then years out, they're in November, February, and year-end. I think that's right as well as because I just did them side-by-side.

[00:58:31] So am I about right on that or am I off here or there? Are you talking PW days? PW days, yes. Yes, yes. They are different. And the other difference between the blue and the purple calendars is that there are three additional PW days.

[00:58:47] Well, those additional PW days I was referencing during those times of the year. Oh, so you're talking about those three that come in. I'm talking about those three. Yes. So when you look at it, that I don't think we're really far off if we're going to embrace what the majority of our community wants with those two week breaks.

[00:59:05] And I'm not certain where we can or cannot. I guess my question to you all is, because we hear both sides, we need more time, we don't, we need more PW days, we don't need.

[00:59:20] I mean, help me make that decision. Yeah, so I think, well, one thing I think is important to understand is like the process by which we make the designations of the PW days is either teacher-directed, school-directed, or division-directed, right?

[00:59:41] So after the calendar is adopted. So can you just, for the public that's listening, can you give like a one-sentence definition for each one of those? Yeah, absolutely. Thank you. So a division-directed day is central office staff, our leadership team directing what's going to happen on that particular professional development day.

[01:00:02] So for example, we offer a lot of very specific content-based professional development opportunities for teachers to attend based on their grade level based on their subject matter at the secondary level on a school directed planning day those days are primarily spent on school improvement activities so things that the school has determined they need to be responsive to in regard to their data they've developed goals written activities and strategies into a school improvement plan and the staff is working towards meeting those goals and collaborating around that work on a teacher directed day the teacher has the ability to determine how they're going to use that

[01:00:38] time for planning purposes they can also use some of that time to complete mandatory required professional development so for example many of our teachers complete some of the required compliance trainings that we have on those teacher directed days that occur early in the year so that's the difference between those three days but right now the calendar that you're looking at just designates all of these as PW days because after we know how many days that the board is going to approve in the calendar, then we actually consult with our associations, our principal associations, our teacher associations to get feedback on when those days that would be teacher-directed would be most beneficial to those particular stakeholders.

[01:01:17] We bring that information back to our leadership team and make the final designation as the days as either a division day, school planning day, or teacher-directed day. So that's kind of how that process plays out and i think when we hear from teachers saying that they don't need more professional development days really what they're i think they're saying is they need more teacher directed time and less division directed time so we know for example like during the pandemic we added a lot of required essentially compliance training right the teachers have to complete online that's not been very popular right those are things that you know eat into a teacher's

[01:01:54] valuable time. So I think when we hear that feedback, what they're saying is the time is very welcome, but they prefer the teacher directed time over the division directed compliance trainings. Thank you for that very comprehensive explanation. And I think that's important for people to hear that and understand that. Um, so my last question is a little bit about still going back to where we were while I respect the decision for culture, inclusive and diversity. I'm I'm also still A little bit there. There's a couple out there that aren't assigned right now is oh religious or observation

[01:02:34] observed cultural religions observances and But I see there's a PW on those days, which I was incorrect about mr. Smith There is a PW a day, but one of those is Orthodox Easter, which isn't listed as an O day So I would appreciate if that could be listed as a cultural or religions of religious observance

[01:02:55] And I'll probably take a go back. But as I said, I'm leaning toward blue or purple. Thank you. Ms. Perrin. Yes, Dr. Reed and staff, I'd like to say that my priority is to take a vote as scheduled on this calendar in nine days on February 9th. I have some questions. What is the plan for that vote? Will the superintendent be providing all four and there will be motions on each or will you just be providing fewer than four or your strongest suggestion, Dr. Reed?

[01:03:31] Thank you, Ms. Marin. I will have to consult with staff, but my intent would be that at the end of this work session, staff will have a better sense of which one or two calendars to refine, and I believe we would bring forward only those that we feel have an opportunity to be passed.

[01:03:55] However, there are a lot of days between now and then, so stay tuned. I also would visit at our chair's meeting and discuss the strategy that our board chair and vice chair might prefer. Thank you. And Mr. Smith, is there any intention to combine elements after this work session and change anything in each of the four proposals?

[01:04:19] So I think that if we can narrow and hear the conversation around particular days, I know that we're hearing things about the out-years, and we can certainly take a look at some of those out-year pieces. And, again, anything else that might come out of the conversation.

[01:04:34] For us, if we can focus on that possible narrowing and then make some changes to calendars that we bring to the board, it's less complicated for us to do that for fewer calendars than it is. Or I guess it's easier to do it for fewer than it is to make unique changes on all four calendars.

[01:04:53] Right, but are you at all considering creating like a different version at this point that combines some of the, what you've been hearing, like a modified blue or a modified purple or a brand new one thing to propose?

[01:05:09] I think we're looking at each other, trying to decide, but I think if there's a clear preference stated this afternoon, then we would want to create a modified calendar to put out there. But again, since we're leaving this open for the public commentary, it'll have to be sort of a real-time adjustment.

[01:05:29] They're not going to be serious material changes, but I think we could look at, for example, we've got the IB test question that's still out there. So there are some adjustments we need to make. We want to bring the best calendar forward possible. Yeah, and in that vein, I too want to lend my support to clarifying the terminology used for all of the breaks, whether they're school days off or total calendar days off.

[01:05:49] I think that could quell concern that I hear mostly from staff about them having two weeks. The APIB test dates, of course, clarifying O-days, what that means, I think a definition on the calendar would be helpful. And I was glad to hear the discussion about professional workdays.

[01:06:08] The last thing I wanted to mention is being focused on the policy and regulatory work here at the school board. In reviewing our policy, you know, it's policy number 1344. It has not been reviewed by the board, previous board, since 2014, which is quite unfortunate.

[01:06:26] So it is eight years since that policy has been done, and I think it's, you know, the responsibility of this board now and our governance committee to be doing that. That said, we do have two regulations. 4421 that was updated in December 2020 and regulation 1344 that was updated in November 21. When I look at these two regulations and the policy, nowhere does it say who approves the calendar. It does not say that the board shall approve the calendar. It does not say that the superintendent shall approve the calendar. It also says in regulation 1344

[01:07:04] regarding holidays the winter vacation is the base the legal holidays of Christmas Day and New Year's Day and other days may be included thus the winter vacation may vary in length from five to ten school days so I offer that because we've heard a lot of different things thrown around this is what our regulation says. Relatedly it talks about the Thanksgiving interesting here is that thanks so this was the one that was updated 1344 updated in November 21 says Thanksgiving vacation consists of the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday. That Friday is given as a holiday in lieu of Veterans

[01:07:41] Day. So perhaps we may have missed that because if we are going to also offer Veterans Day as a holiday then we are then sort of double counting that time. So all of this to say that I think that I would qualify this as the 11th hour of this calendar that people are hankering for for months away from what other divisions have done. So I think we do the best we can with what we have and we get help on updating

[01:08:10] our policy. Thank you. Ms. Marin, point taken. Thank you, Ms. Marin. Ms. Seismerheiser. Thank you and I also appreciate, I know the quickness of that survey, I know that it was put together very quickly and to get that information from the community regarding the calendar options where the community is at and I've been reviewing it as well and there definitely is a preference for that 10-day

winter break is noticed in that calendar. So I guess my one question I will have as we're looking at these calendar options I um I do wonder I think others have brought up whether

[01:08:49] we can look at purple and adding some days back. I've heard the same thing Ms. Cohen has added about the value of Veterans Day and just the celebrations our schools do and um the amount the students learn about that and after what Ms. Merrin read about the regulation I'm wondering if that's something we can look at for purple just to put it out there in the air I do think it is It's so important to give our families that day off, but also I think there's such value in teaching our families.

[01:09:14] But the other question I really had is, now that we have the rolling gradebook, what is the impact of that on quarter end and needing professional workdays around quarter end? I'm wondering if there's more flexibility given a rolling gradebook, so I'll pause and ask for that answer.

[01:09:31] Well, I think it's important first to point out that the rolling gradebook is not widely used across the division. In some schools it's widely used, in others it's really not used at all. So it's not something that's consistently used that as part of the whole discussion with our high school principals around consistency of, you know, grading policies and practices.

[01:09:50] But even with a rolling gradebook, I mean, teachers still need time to do the end of the quarter grade calculations, make determinations about where students are, be able to provide students feedback. So rolling gradebook, you're still doing a lot of really all that same work that teachers on a traditional gradebook would be doing at the end of the quarter.

[01:10:09] It's just that the final grade is not calculated and transcribed until the end of the school year. Students have an opportunity to make things up and demonstrate mastery of things at different times. But there's still a lot of planning and preparation time that teachers need on unrolling gradebook.

[01:10:26] So I ask that question because the number one thing that I'm hearing is the choppy weeks, right? And how we can maybe move some of our, I'm not trying to take away professional work days. I'm certainly not trying to take away the time from teachers to be able to get their grades in. But I wonder with if we have a rolling gradebook or even with some of our other policies What flexibility is there in moving some of these quarter ends if we have flexibility in adding to the gradebook at a later date?

[01:10:50] Anyway, at which point the professional work days might be able to be moved to allow our teachers to have that But maybe address some of these choppy weeks. So I'm that's my biggest question. I would have no I think it's a great question and we do have flexibility to move the end dates of quarters, right? I mean we do control that all things being equal I think when you ask most teachers they would prefer that the quarters be as balanced as possible of course but we're looking at a lot of different variables in the calculus of you know developing this calendar so that is something that we could look at if we make some adjustments to quarters unbalance the quarters if it has a beneficial effect in terms of you know creating more continuity for for more five-day you know

[01:11:29] continuous weeks so that's I'm not looking for massively unbalanced quarters right but a little little tweak here and there to see if we can, because that's the consistency. You know, I still think there are support staff concerns about that long winter break. I hear that a lot about our support staff concerns, so I don't know if there's a way to address that. So I'm still open to the conversation of a shorter winter break, but I do recognize that the majority of our surveys talked about that longer winter break. So I'm wondering if there's a way to look at some of our calendars and, you know, address kind of the year-end concerns

where we end on a Monday or Tuesday, maybe play with the quarters, move some of those professional work days so we can address that.

[01:12:03] I think if we can address that, and potentially Veterans Day is one, if we're using the purple, I think we can come a long way to getting there is what I'm kind of seeing. So that's my biggest question is whether it's blue or whether it's purple, can we figure out how to move and address the choppiness?

[01:12:22] So we could take a look at some of that. I do want to point out that blue and purple were sort of built on the same methodology And then we made a 990 hour or less than 180 day calendar. And so if we bring those days back for students, it will be hard for us to keep those additional professional work days in the calendar as we think about the length of the contract.

[01:12:46] And so it would probably start looking more like the purple or more like the blue calendar if we were to bring days back without making some adjustments to the current blue days that are within the calendar. So those are things that we could look at to bring some of those days back for students to make a 180-day calendar, but we then have to look at other adjustments with blue days in the calendar.

[01:13:13] And just to put a little bit more finer point on that, if we have three days right now in the purple calendar that are additional professional work days and we wanted to modify those, we could go to two additional work days and take one of those days and convert it to another school day, for example.

[01:13:29] But to Marty's point, the more we do that, if you do that three times, you get to blue, so, yeah. Well, I bring that up because the number one concern I'm hearing is instructional consistency, right, and coming out of COVID, reducing the instruction. I understand that there's – I'd be curious. You mentioned something about changes to inclusive practices out of the special enhancement plan, but I hadn't seen the plan yet, so I'm kind of curious what that was that you're referring to.

[01:13:51] Well, I was just foreshadowing some of the things that we're going to be working on. We're, you know, working to try to get that plan, as you know, developed, and we're working to get a lot of stakeholder voices into that plan and the development of the plan. But we're trying to get that developed this spring, and we know from both the state and from the AIR report that inclusive practices is one of the areas that we need to do a lot of work with, and that's not something that you do with special education teachers, that's something you do with the whole faculty.

[01:14:16] So I was just using that as an example of something that we know we're gonna need some time for in the future. - I appreciate that, and I guess my biggest advocacy is also maybe looking at the orange calendar on that out year. right to see if we can have some adjust you know flexibility around maybe that's a two-week i'm not tied to that i recognize this the survey was very much strongly on the two-week winter break i my biggest thing is what can we do to move maybe quarter end whatever you know veterans day whatever we can look at to address that consistency of weeks i think that will get us that's the biggest thing i'm hearing from everybody thank you miss uh keys gamara yes

[01:14:55] i will try to limit my comments i realized i missed um what everybody a lot of people said so I'll just try to focus on my primary goals. First of all, I've heard from members in the community and have continued to be concerned about maximizing the number of instructional days.

[01:15:14] I'm sure that's a goal for you. But on the blue calendar, how many, and I'm sorry, I may have missed it in this, in the various handouts I have, how many days of holidays do we have for the blue and purple calendar total?

[01:15:50] And I think we've looked at those breakdowns in terms of the number of days for holidays other than we have the number of student days remains the same at 180 on the blue, orange, and green calendars.

[01:16:07] I'm trying to get an idea. For example, one of the things I think in my interviews on the calendar, each of these, we have a chart here that says number of five-day weeks per quarter. But what I don't see is number of five-day weeks we could have had per quarter, right?

[01:16:28] And there may be a little variance. So I'd like to be able to look at what was possible and then how professional workdays, et cetera, are impacting the calendar. And so when we look at the days off and how they align with the religious holidays that we've recommended, For those religious holidays, it depends on where they fall during the week.

[01:16:57] Some fall during the week in some years, some fall during the weekend. And so we didn't recognize those. And for us, given that we have a 195-day contract for teachers, when we pull those pink days out, those PW days out of the week that we have for professional development, the only place that we can put those is either before school or after school to create that smoothing effect.

[01:17:22] And so, we would either be asking teachers to, we would be lumping those days to have a later start with teachers coming back to do professional development all up at the front of the calendar, or doing all that professional development at the end of the calendar to create that smoothing.

[01:17:43] But we know that in terms of supporting professional development that our teachers have preferred and that it's best practice to provide professional development throughout the year. So, it would be difficult to show what that smooth calendar would look like with the taking the O days out or the professional work days out.

[01:18:05] So, I guess the reason I'm asking the question is I would think that there may be people, parents in the community, some of whom have contacted me, that want to know how many instructional days are occurring per quarter, irrespective of whether we're talking about professional work days or holidays or whatever and so if if is there a way that we can just maybe not today but it'd be right is it did i miss it no it's the so we had the quarter duration that shows in the lower right hand corner of each calendar the number of days in each of those

[01:18:42] quarters and so for the first quarter on uh the blue draft for next year we have 46 days in the first quarter 45 in the second 44 in the third and 45 okay so of those those are the those are the actual days available those are the actual days available and then below that you'll see the number of five-day instructional weeks and so in the first quarter we have six uh full five-day instructional weeks uh five in the second quarter eight in the third quarter and seven in the fourth

[01:19:16] quarter okay so but the 46th when we look at quarter one with october 27th next to that that's the number of days available correct but it's not the number of instructional days am i reading that that is the number of instructional days it is the number of okay okay all right i'm sorry i didn't um understand that fully all right so um i'm also wondering um And I think Ms. Marin, who stepped out, mentioned this.

[01:19:56] Do we have a regulation or policy that is outlining our priorities for how we build a calendar? We do not currently have a policy. The board does not have a policy on how we develop the calendar.

[01:20:13] We look at the board priorities, the community priorities, and superintendent priorities, work to bring back calendar options but there is no policy on how the calendar shall be developed. I am looking at policy 1344.3 the one that Ms. Marin was referring to that was revised in 2014 and it refers to a set of guidelines it adhered to every year in a consistent manner and I don't know where those are kept. They're not attached. The reason I ask it is I've participated in a number

[01:20:51] of these conversations now and I don't recall seeing those guidelines either but you're you know what I'm trying no I don't know what you're talking about I know that we've had conversations about what our priorities are from year to year but I think it may be helpful for commute for the community to know this is what's guiding these decisions and so for me what would guide my decision is increasing the number of instructional days respecting the needs of our staff for professional development as well as respecting the needs within the

[01:21:27] community do through cultural or otherwise practices so that all students have full access to our educational days so I mean I think it may be helpful because we're obviously trying to de-escalate to a large extent and that I will end on I would look forward to having those so that we're not reinventing the wheel every year and I know we have some principles and we've had lots of discussions but I think we have to think in terms of longevity and

[01:22:01] I appreciate the opportunity to go past my time thank you and I know that we've had discussions with our neighboring jurisdictions they there are a neighboring jurisdictions where the board has developed a policy to state that these are the considerations to take when developing the calendar every year and then as part of that conversation i know that many of our colleagues felt that it would be great if we could have a regional approach to how those calendars are developed so that we have greater consistency among our northern virginia region i just have to respond to that if we look

[01:22:39] at our survey that wasn't the most important thing right in terms of the regional aligning with others you're correct in that in terms of the community thank you miss pokarski oh boy okay feels like deja vu here again um however i do think we have seen a trend kind of coming out of these different surveys and feedback mechanisms that we have used with the community i will say

[01:23:18] that something i had not thought of but apparently i've heard from quite a few people and i i spoke with miss cohen she too had heard is that many of our families have um penned shared custody agreements over these winter breaks which is you know just something else that i just found interesting and i would not have thought of so with that i don't know that either the purple or the blue are perfect either i think um their issues around you know there's those professional

[01:23:56] work days at the end of october um because those two weeks end of october and then the beginning of november are just so choppy or i guess it's the second week of november um so i wonder if there's space for us to kind of do away with those at the end of october tack them on to november 6th and 7th. And honestly, and, you know, I was very supportive of bringing Veterans Day as a day off. And, you know, I had shared that with Ms. Cohen last year. But it makes no sense

[01:24:31] to me that in this purple calendar, or in the rest of them, that this year it's a day off when it's not really Veterans Day. I mean, Veterans Day falls on the Saturday. I know the federal holiday um gives that extra day off but practically speaking i think would be okay to have school that it just to me it doesn't make sense so anyway i see that there's some tweaks like that that we could possibly have i will say that that may 3rd date is actually um orthodox good friday it is the

[01:25:04] holiest day um for orthodox christians of the year and i appreciate dr presidio and staff that you made that effort to go talk and ask about that window. This is, you know, one of those things that we're going to run into. We've said that equity and inclusion is very important to us, so we're making this concerted effort, and it happened that that day actually had many, many student absences and staff, I think, as well. So I put it out there. I don't know what the right answer is but I'm putting it out there for us to know that that's what that is so what we do with

[01:25:42] it I you know I think we'll have to figure out I don't know how many students take IB placement tests you know absences of course we're talking about thousands upon thousands and that's not to say that the IB tests are not important but it's something that we'll have to consider and I see that my whole time is up, so I'll save the rest.

[01:26:07] - Okay, thank you. Do you need any responses? - I don't think so, not at this time. - Okay, all right, let me run through this quickly then. So, I really do think based upon, you know, and Helen mentioned earlier, that based upon the survey that we had earlier, and what we're seeing so far with this survey, things are consistent, right?

[01:26:31] The public wants the two week winter break, and um so you know i guess i might lean that way to then to the blue or purple calendar given that that has shown up consistently um you know some of the other priorities that i've heard from people are um you know that they want to know you know what the calendar is so can you please vote and move it forward so i will definitely be looking to having that vote as uh you know at the next meeting and also that people want a multi-year calendar they would love to be able to plan ahead so um you know that is something i would look forward to as well um and then of course you

[01:27:10] know a huge priority for me was the maximizing instructional time um so trying to maximize the five-day weeks that we had i heard all the way down to students that you know they just felt like having the weeks chopped up um the way that they kind of ended up this fall was very difficult for them so um so part of my questions is and sloan you talked a little bit about this i'm thinking okay if i'm looking at the purple calendar and we have some of these questions about how many professional work days do we really need I guess that your point is well taken if we just added if we said okay instead of those three professional work days in

[01:27:45] the purple calendar if we had two then we really are at the blue calendar I guess is what you're saying or a day different from the blue calendar so you know so that was part of my question how would that work it's a it's a 990 hour calendar but it's 177 days can we add two days back in as instructional days and maybe if we're strategic about where we add those in we can have two additional five-day weeks in that calendar is that possible yeah so on the

[01:28:23] purple calendar that has those three additional professional work days you know if there was board consensus we could say that for example we wanted to take one of those professional work days and convert it to a school day we could do that you could take two additional days and convert those to school days if you take three then we're back at blue right so we're really talking about taking one or two of those days and converting them if that was something that the board wanted to do and in looking at the calendars it might be difficult to find two full weeks that we could smooth out to make full five-day

[01:29:01] weeks. Currently looking at the calendar, we have a couple of days that have professional work days that are singletons that currently make a four-day week, and it perhaps would work in October, but

I'm not sure we're working other spaces on the calendar. All right, I would also support a couple people I've talked about is maybe the quarters aren't exactly even, but we move the work days around a little bit to, you know, have less two-day weeks, three-day weeks, et cetera.

[01:29:35] So I would definitely support that. I also, you know, just looking at the religious holidays and the time, the absentee data, you know, the Orthodox holidays, and I would defer to my colleague, Ms. Bukarski, who celebrates those days, as, you know, I know there are a couple of them, which one might make sense if we added a day back in to look at that holiday.

[01:30:00] so those are just a couple of points that I think we could consider. But I really do wanna thank you for working so hard on all of these different calendar iterations. You know, I think overall they all look pretty good and you really listened to adding five-day weeks from this previous year, so I thank you for that.

[01:30:21] I'm hopeful with a little bit of tweaking that maybe we can come to some consensus around this calendar. We are already at 4:15, which is the time we are supposed to be ending. We had a number of people that wanted to go back.

[01:30:39] If it's okay with board members, can we give people a one minute go back that requested? Yeah, yeah, it's gonna have to be quick. But we've got a number of people that aren't here.

[01:30:55] Laura Jane, you would be first. - Okay, I'm glad to hear about the Veterans Day, maybe potential flexibility, that week after spring break, I'm hearing a lot of consternation about that.

[01:31:11] I recognize that the 10th needs to stay where it is, but can we either move those professional work days to before or after spring break so that it's clustered and makes then either spring break a little longer and we just come back for a normal week, save one day.

[01:31:26] And that was true of all the years in all the calendars. Like we can't have people come back for a week then be off for another four days um the three years was really really important that was consistent feedback from everybody that i heard from the other is if we could steal potentially a veterans day and maybe move that october get get another work day back from that october one then we'd be talking about ending the school year on the blue calendar on the 12th which would also mean that we are ending earlier which we routinely heard it helps us recruit for esy which i think is a

[01:32:02] really really big deal we can't go later um and i just wanted to say super fast that the alignment is rare sometimes that we have staff and families aligned on something i've been floored by the feedback about the two-week break but it all aligns this time thank you okay thank you i'll speed through too um i think that we are coming closer with calendar two the blue calendar my concern over the blue calendar calendar and one that is huge is we are getting out on the 15th

[01:32:41] of december for the break at the winter that is when many of our constituents many of the families are still working and having that two weeks there is a major challenge for families as they close out the year and so um that is primarily the difference between the blue and the orange calendars and um you know if we want some flexibility maybe move it to half the next week but it's it's a real challenge for working families it's a challenge for two income families

[01:33:19] and more importantly it is a challenge for our kids who need structure um to be off for two weeks starting on the 15th of December. My other concern is the-- - Quickly.

[01:33:35] - Okay, sorry. - Ms. McLaughlin, do you wanna go back? - Real quickly, Dr. Rhee, 'cause it's always hard when you don't have all the historical context. I think we are somewhere roughly around year seven of having a two week winter break started by Dr. Garza.

[01:33:55] Consistently now for around seven years or more, it is overwhelming people want two breaks. Respectfully, this year we ended on December 16th. I didn't receive a single email from a single family saying that having winter break where the kids were done on December 16th and started was a problem.

[01:34:15] We've got to follow the science. Veterans Day, same thing. That is something that multiple boards have wrestled with because we have high military population and it's all over the board. But in the end, our military families said they liked having that holiday off with their children and it's a federal holiday. I am uncomfortable now at the 11th hour that we suddenly want to take that out of a three-year calendar when our community didn't tell us, please put us back in school on Veterans Day. So that's my only concern, that we haven't heard that advocacy and we would suddenly revert back. Thank you. Ms. Samesh, do you want to go back?

[01:34:54] Yeah, thank you. One, I guess if there are takeaways or things to think about beyond today, Planning time is definitely something I'm a little bit concerned about since it doesn't sound like a majority is with the purple one I want to elevate again the IB issue with Good Friday. I think Overall my concern is really fairness and how we're moving forward as to what days we recognize and what days remain O days Which ones are professional development? Which ones are holidays?

[01:35:21] Why do we you know why did we choose to make one a holiday instead of professional development this year as opposed to orthodox? you know and without putting communities against each other which leads me to a point I know we've all talked about which is an idea of developing a calendar policy I'll be looking to miss Corbett Sanders and the governance team to work on that but that brings my mean my advocacy to my two colleagues where it doesn't make sense for us to approve a three-year now the rationale for a three-year calendar is awesome but this year when we don't even have a calendar in place and there is a serious issue in my view and I've heard from several colleagues about the fairness piece we ought to approve one year since it's

[01:36:00] already not perfect and and has problems and then come up with develop a policy and then we can develop do three years the following year when we have you know priorities aligned and thought has been given to how to do it you know well so miss me yeah that's my time thanks mr. Koufax thank you and I tend to agree with that because I feel like we could get a good one-year calendar and then

[01:36:28] GO ON BEYOND THAT. IF IT'S A STICKING POINT WITH PEOPLE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CONVINCE ME HOW WE'RE GOING TO FILL THIS IN OVER A THREE YEAR PERIOD AND DO IT WELL BECAUSE SOME OF THIS IS THE NINTH HOUR. I'M SORRY I HAD TO SPEAK TO SOMETHING THAT'S HAPPENING IN MY DISTRICT. SO, MEGHAN, I HEARD YOUR COMMENTS AND IT TOOK US MANY YEARS TO GET TO THIS. I HAVE HIGH MILITARY POPULATIONS IN MY SCHOOLS. THEY WERE SO GRATEFUL FOR HAVING THAT DAY OFF AND THEN HAVING THE CELEBRATIONS ON another day I don't feel that that's the way to move them around I think we

[01:37:04] should look at the PW days that are listed that way now and then go back and see which one we can if we are coalescing around a two-week winter break again looking at the purple versus the blue option so that's where I am and if you'll check your mailboxes the fifth grade class of Bushell Elementary sent us a lovely persuasive letter why we should maintain two-week winter break.

[01:37:31] Ms. Teicherheiser do you need to go back? Just briefly I do think one of the things I do hear from people pretty consistently is that they just want to know right and we're here after many of the other jurisdictions have already passed a calendar so I understand the desire for a calendar policy I think it's important and I support that but I also think that you know we need to figure got a way to have some consistency for our families our teachers our staff um in planning so maybe we look at a two-year calendar maybe we look and then that will give us time to really get

[01:38:06] a good policy in place that we have time as a board to do that and then we can implement it but i think i do think a multi-year calendar is very very important i hear the same thing about winter break um my big advocacy remains the same how can we find a way to tweak these professional work days look at veterans day and that's that's really what i want to see whether it's um and i wonder you know when you're looking at the purple versus blue and the extra professional work days maybe we look at veterans day as a professional work day as a as one option although that doesn't really help the issue of the teacher the kids in school but i just think we can play around with that a little bit but i would really advocate that i don't think we can go through this every year and

[01:38:45] have our community wait this way i hear a lot of frustration on that so um however we can do maybe two years maybe three years and develop that policy that's my biggest push thank you mr keys camaro which i could go back i'm just going to emphasize i would like to know the number of weeks i know we the five day as i'm looking through all my comments that i've received the overall the biggest concern has been not having chopped up days uh weeks right where you can have two day weeks especially after that spring break and i think somebody else mentioned the same thing

[01:39:19] um i i do want to know what i want to list out what number of days number of full weeks would be available we have on here on this chart here number of five day weeks per quarter but we don't know note the number of five days weeks that would be available but for holidays pw and all the other things that we're accounting for so i would like to have it in context um i also had a question when i in my interviews about absenteeism i'm not quite i'd like to have you guys take a look at

[01:39:56] some of the holidays that we have because i'm i don't know if i'm misinterpreting it but i'm not always seeing the high absenteeism even though we have it as a holiday so um i think getting that continuity um veterans day that's been a long conversation um i i i i don't know know what to say. I want to respect our military community and I want to have planning and I want a policy. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Pekarski. Yeah. Quickly, I also, the number one advocacy I hear

[01:40:30] is people are tired of this yearly rigmarole of multiple work sessions, conversations, etc., etc. They want to know. They need to plan. I hope we can get to that three-year. We're going to have to work, you know, by calling each other and talking to each other and trying to find something where we are all most comfortable, but I hope we get there. I too worry about the choppy weeks. It is very difficult for parents, I know, but it's also difficult for teachers and schools to get

[01:41:07] kids back in, to get them reengaged. It's almost like a restart every time. So we've, you know, I know the conversation back and forth and why we have that but it's difficult on kids So I'd like to see more consistency and just to clarify veterans day I was not suggesting we get rid of I was specifically talking about this year when veterans day falls on a Saturday But the federal government gives an extra day in recognition. I don't think we need to do that It's still a day off. So just wanted to clarify that. Thank you. Thank you

[01:41:42] The only thing I wanted to point out is, as we're talking about putting together some kind of a calendar policy, is I know this year in your first presentation, and I know last year in the calendar presentation, there's a slide with, I probably should have pulled it up, like six, eight, nine bullets of these are the things we considered, you know, very carefully sort of back and forth as we developed these example calendars.

[01:42:12] So we've got a really great start at, you know, a list or guidelines or, you know, whatever we want. You know, you guys have already put out the list of how you, what guidelines you've used to put together these sample calendars. That's the framework. And within that, as we look at the framework, we look at things holistically without that perhaps the prioritization that you shall consider these things first or consider these things, then these, then these aspects of the calendar.

[01:42:42] - Well, I guess with that, I hope this was helpful. Mr. Smith, would you like to add something? - So one thing, I know that we have gotten a lot of feedback from board members, and so we know that we've taken notes and we will review some of the comments from this particular session.

[01:43:00] If there is any other information that you would like to share with us, we can work with Dr. Reed and the chair to see how we can get that information to us in a timely manner so that we can ensure your thoughts are part of our considerations moving forward and I also did want to ask going back to the the first ask of possibly narrowing down if the board was perhaps any closer to saying that one of those calendars I didn't hear one calendar really talked about much today and so I didn't know if

[01:43:34] that's a calendar that we could possibly move to the side the green it It sounds like, is there any board member that has an issue if the green calendar is no longer considered? It's one calendar, but it's four versions of one calendar, so that's easier for us when we have to make changes or make adjustments.

[01:43:59] So let me ask another question, too. It does seem that there's some discussion about the two-week winter break seeming to be a priority, which would lead us to the purple or the blue calendars. Do we want to, is there anyone that would have an issue if we just focused on the blue and purple calendars?

[01:44:22] We have a couple of people. And Dr. Anderson said blue or orange as well.

[01:44:47] Please. So, you know, when we say, just to jump in here, not to jump in here, but please. We have time is limited. We don't have another time for another work session on calendars. So when we say keep talking about it, I'd just like to get an idea of what that means in terms of keep talking about it.

[01:45:04] because I would my advocacy would be to say let's try to give some staff some direction on which calendars to tweak and I and I was one who was an orange calendar favorite initially so you know we're gonna I think somebody somebody said early on right there's no perfect calendar so what we need to figure out how to do is get to some consensus I'll stop but there's no time for another work session so I'm gonna say so can I make a suggestion so can we take a consensus on how many people will only support a two-week break in a calendar

[01:45:42] do we have who will only support a calendar that has a two-week break that makes a little bit more sense okay so good luck sorry about that so staff will uh continue to wrestle with this can we ask one more question about the green versus purple because those are both have two-week winter breaks whether we can maybe narrow down one of them to give staff guidance not not green sorry purple

[01:46:20] versus blue excuse me purple versus blue to give staff guidance one of those two you could ask whatever you want the difference between the two calendars purple and blue are three professional development days that is it and they come at different points in time and i did the analysis if anybody wants to see that it's only three days different the the and it's the with the addition of three pw days which are defined as sloan said three different ways they're not defined yet we

[01:46:50] don't know if they're teacher directed school directed or division directed okay so it seems like we have oh karen i think the question was asked how many people are wed to a 180 versus a 990 hour based calendar because that's the difference between the purple and the blue the blue is 180 correct? Blue is 180. So that's the question I think we can ask that although I think that question was answered in our first work session so

[01:47:27] but we can go ahead and ask that yeah okay I don't know that there's really any more guidance that we can give you today especially with half the board not being in this room right now I mean I think it sounds like we are working on three is better than working on four okay so there we are we can certainly bring something back and again I did hear we have had conversations and we have received emails about some of the out-year calendars and so we can look at making some possible adjustments for out-year calendars where there are

[01:48:07] issues can we just get a feel also of the one year and policy versus like three years i say that because it'll be a lot more work for them to do three of each right if they're making adjustments rather than uh one year i i wish i wish we could get some more people at the table um okay we can we can we can show us see a show of hands of one versus two versus three

[01:48:41] preference so who would prefer a one-year calendar may i make a compromise suggestion um i i know i've heard a number of people say they they wanted some continuity perhaps we're not looking at a three-year we're looking at a possible two and then that still gives people yeah that's what i'm trying to do so one two or three so one year preference okay two year preference okay well i just need people to vote two year you're either going to vote for two or

[01:49:16] three at this point so pick one two one two three three four people and then three one two three four five you can't vote sounds like a three-year Carl had said three two I okay well we can count Ricky too but then that's still six five so my other comment would be just given what everyone talked about it may be possible and if you go back you might be able to meld blue and purple

[01:49:55] so you would end up with yes an indigo calendar kind of so you would end up with one calendar with the calendar with a there are three days apart and so you would they're they're basically the same calendar with those three additional work days but we will we we have gotten good feedback today we will go back and review this work session and you can rest assured that we're going to bring something back to the board because we always bring something back to the board thank you

[01:50:31] thanks we tried to cut it down it's not where we landed all right everybody we're adjourned thanks



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