

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Constance Hubbard, Superintendent

SUBJECT: **REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL CALENDAR -
SCHOOL YEARS 2014-15 and 2015-16**

I. **SUPPORT INFORMATION**

The Instructional Calendar is a negotiated “working condition” as included in the collective bargaining process between the District and Association of Piedmont Teachers (APT). As part of the Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) process the calendar has been agreed to be negotiated separately from the annual openers each year. The current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is in force through June 30, 2014, but discussion of the 2014-15 Instructional Calendar has begun.

Although subject to negotiations, the District and APT gives consideration to input from CSEA and parents. A parent survey has been distributed as recently as last school year. The Instructional Calendar includes setting the first and last day of school for students, non-school days for students that are either vacation or designated professional development days for staff. The setting of the semester length, report card grading periods, minimum days, conference days, and testing schedules are not subject to negotiations and are set after the Instructional Calendar is voted and approved by the APT membership and the Board of Education.

Information from past surveys indicates that there is not a clear consensus as to the timing for the start of the school year or placement of vacation days during the year. The Instructional Calendar has strict requirements from the State that must be addressed:

- 180 school attendance days – a day must be at least 325 minutes to count as a day. Funding from the State is calculated based on the attendance rate of students on the designated 180 student days in the calendar.
- Each grade level must also offer a specified total minimum number of minutes in the 180 days.
- Each grade level at each school must offer the equal amount of total minutes in the school/District (e.g., all third grades in each of the three elementary schools must offer same total minutes per year).
- Prescribed holidays included as part of the calendar with some flexibility when scheduled except November 11, which is an “immovable holiday” and must be a non-school day if falls between Monday and Friday.
- Per local agreement, the APT base work year of 185 days that includes 180 student days, 3 professional development days and 2 work days.

The start and end of the school year varies in districts throughout the State. The traditional calendar starts school near Labor Day and ends mid-June. Research supports the “year round” calendar as the most supportive of student learning throughout the year. Recent discussions have included the possibility of setting a calendar that allows for the semester to end prior to the traditional winter break at the end of December that goes through the beginning of the New Year. As an example, attached is the Instructional Calendar for the Palo Alto Unified School District that reflects that schedule.

It is important for staff, community and parents to understand the rationale that supports this calendar as a consideration. The start and end of the school year has a direct effect on the schedule of holiday/breaks through out the school year to meet State requirements and District agreements. In addition to the State and local requirements, the Instructional Calendar is designed to support students by considering the following factors that affect all:

- A schedule that supports optimal learning and long-term retention of academic material for students in grades pre-K through grade 12.
- Balance of student workload and high stakes stressors (e.g., testing and college applications).
- Balance of work/school/family time for students, parents, and staff.
- Decision timeline that allows for planning for staff and families.
- Professional development schedule that supports teaching and learning.

Starting the school year earlier in August provides the opportunity to end the first semester prior to winter break and end the school year by the beginning of June. Considerations that support this option include:

- Winter break can be a time that is free from school work for students and staff to be enjoyed with less stress.
- Provides flexibility for content pacing throughout the school year.
- Provides more teaching time for students to be prepared for high-stakes tests such as Advanced Placement.
- Provides more instructional time in all grades prior to the standardized testing required by the State (e.g., prior requirements associated with STAR testing).
- High school students who participate in Fall sports must report by early August and families need to schedule vacations to support that schedule.

Considerations for the more traditional calendar start of the school year near Labor Day include:

- Allows for planning of vacation and attendance in summer programs in August
- Less availability for summer opportunities for students in grades K-8 during first two weeks in June. May impact child care.

- Requires a later release date in June that may interfere with the start of summer camps/opportunities.

The development of a calendar for two consecutive academic years was identified as a priority by staff, parents and the Board. It has been problematic the past few years due to the uncertainty of the budget and the need for consideration of furlough days and shortened student school year requirements.

The District and APT are working together to set the 2014-15 and 2015-16 Instructional Calendars by November 2013. It is important that a two-year sequence is considered so that the effects of starting earlier or later allow for the transition to smooth the effects on the summer of 2014 since the current year end date of June 12, 2014 is already set.

The timeline is for APT to vote in October and to bring it to the Board for consideration at the Board meeting either on October 23, 2013 or November 13, 2013. The options will include calendars that parallel this year, ones that start after Labor Day and end school in the third week of June, and versions that start mid-August and end the first week in June that will allow for the semester to end prior to winter break.

The purpose of the discussion this evening is to provide the community with an opportunity to provide input for consideration.

II. **RECOMMENDATION: REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

Palo Alto Unified School District

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR FOR 2013-14

JULY 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	H	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
AUGUST 2013 12 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	WD	SD	WD	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
SEPTEMBER 2013 20 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	H	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
OCTOBER 2013 22 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	SD	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
NOVEMBER 2013 17 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	H	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	LH	H	LH	30
DECEMBER 2013 15 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	H	H	LH	LH	LH	28
29	LH	H				

8/15..... First Day for Students

Middle & High Schools
10/11..... End of 1 st Quarter
12/20..... End of Semester (86 days)
3/14..... End of 3 rd Quarter
5/29..... End of Semester (94 days)
Elementary Schools
11/8, 2/21, 5/29.... Progress Report Periods

5/29..... Last Day for Students

Non-Student Days

9/2 Labor Day
11/11 Veterans' Day
11/27-29 ... Thanksgiving Holiday
12/23-1/3 ... Winter Break
1/20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
2/14 Lincoln's Birthday
2/17 Washington's Birthday
3/31-4/4 Spring Break
5/26 Memorial Day

8/12..... Teacher Work Day
8/14..... Teacher Work Day
5/30 Teacher Work Day
8/13 Staff Dev Day
10/18 Staff Dev Day
2/13 Staff Dev Day

H = Federal/State Holiday
LH = Local Holiday
SD = Staff Development Day
WD = Teacher Work Day
☐ = District Student Minimum Day
▨ = Finals Testing Day
◻ = First/Last Day of School

The winter break is intended to be a time that is free from schoolwork for students and staff. There should be no expectations on the part of students or staff that schoolwork is done over this period.

No assignments should be given over the winter break, and any long-term assignments given before winter break should not be due during the first week back from the break.

JANUARY 2014 19 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			H	LH	LH	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	H	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
FEBRUARY 2014 17 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	SD	H	15
16	H	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	
MARCH 2014 20 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	LH					
APRIL 2014 18 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		LH	LH	LH	LH	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
MAY 2014 20 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	H	27	28	29	WD	
JUNE 2014 0 days						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Approved 5/10/11