

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

A. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Interruptions of instructional time and time off task must be kept to a minimum. The principal is responsible for ensuring that instructional time is maintained and protected in the school schedule. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring optimal use of instructional time in his or her classes. Each teacher also shall ensure that instructional activities do not interfere with students' instructional time in other classes with other teachers. School personnel are encouraged to seek creative means of reducing transitional time and scheduling non-instructional activities. A proposal for alternative scheduling of classes or other such strategies may be a part of a school improvement plan.

Assemblies and other school-sponsored programs and activities must be sufficiently related to the instructional program in order to constitute instructional time. Such programs and activities should be scheduled so students do not routinely miss the same class(es).

B. SCHOOL DAY

The daily schedule and length of the school day may vary from school to school if approved by the board of education. The school day may include hours of instructional time and instructional services between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The "instructional" day includes only those hours a student is assigned to a teacher for the primary purpose of instruction. Breaks in the instructional day for announcements, changing classes, homeroom, lunch, pep rallies, school dances, and similar non-instructional activities are not part of the instructional day and may not be counted towards the minimum instructional hours requirement established in Section D, below.

C. OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

Except for year-round schools or schools operating under a modified calendar, the opening date for students will be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26, and the closing date for students will be no later than the Friday closest to June 11, unless otherwise authorized by the board or State Board of Education.

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

Upon a showing of good cause, as defined by G.S. 115C-84.2(d), the board will seek a waiver of the opening date from the State Board of Education.

The board will revise the closing date only if necessary to comply with the minimum requirements for instructional days or instructional time.

D. SCHOOL CALENDAR

The board shall annually adopt a uniform school calendar for the operation of all schools in the school system; however, an individual school may operate on an alternative schedule upon board approval.

The superintendent shall annually appoint a school calendar committee. The committee shall consist of the superintendent's designee(s) and parent representatives. The committee shall develop and present a proposed school calendar for review and approval by the board at or before the board's regularly scheduled meeting in December.

The school calendar in all schools will be for 215 days and will provide for a minimum of 185 days or 1025 hours of instruction covering at least nine months. A school "month" is defined as 20 days of instruction. If school is closed early due to inclement weather, the day and the number of instructional hours originally scheduled may count towards the required minimum number of instructional days or hours. As funding permits, the board may pursue increasing the number of instructional hours or days, at least for those students who need more time to learn the curriculum.

The board may initiate or review recommendations from the superintendent or a school improvement team for modifying the traditional school calendar to a year-round calendar. The superintendent and individual schools are encouraged to obtain input from teachers and other personnel as well as from the community in developing proposals for modifying the school calendar. A year-round school may be included as a part of a school improvement plan.

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

1. The calendar will consist of 215 days and shall meet state requirements for the minimum instructional days and/or the minimum instructional hours.
2. At least ten (10) of the days on the calendar will be designated as annual vacation leave days.
3. The calendar will include the same or an equivalent number of legal holidays as those designated by the State Personnel Commission for State employees, including Veteran's Day if it falls on a weekday.
4. School will not be scheduled on Sundays.

5. The total number of workdays for teachers employed for a 10-month term will not exceed 195 days.
6. The calendar will designate “instructional” days, when students must be present.
7. The remaining days will be scheduled by the board, in consultation with school principals, as “flexible” days, for use as required or optional teacher workdays, additional instructional days, or other lawful purposes.
8. Of the “flexible” days described in subsection D.7, the board will designate at least two (2) days as protected days on which teachers may take accumulated vacation leave. All other “flexible” days may be designated as days on which teachers may take accumulated leave, but the board will give teachers at least fourteen (14) calendar days’ notice before requiring a teacher to work instead of taking vacation leave on any of these days. A teacher may elect to waive this notice requirement for one or more of these days.
9. The board may, due to school closings because of inclement weather or other reasons, use any of the “flexible” days designated in subsection D.7 above as make-up days for those instructional days that were missed. If necessary, these make-up days may be scheduled after the last day of student attendance. If either of the two protected days described in subsection D.8 above are scheduled as a make-up day, teachers may take accumulated vacation leave on the make-up day and will not be required to work.
10. If the school calendar requires students to attend on Memorial Day, each principal shall ensure that the significance of Memorial Day is recognized in the school on that day. If students are not scheduled to attend school on Memorial Day, recognition of the significance of Memorial Day will be provided at another time as part of the citizenship curriculum (see policy 3530, Citizenship and Character Education).
11. If the school calendar requires students to attend school on September 17, which is Constitution and Citizenship Day, each principal shall ensure that the signing of the United States Constitution is commemorated in the school on that day. If students are not required to attend school on September 17, the principal shall ensure that Constitution and Citizenship Day is commemorated during the preceding or following week (see policy 3530, Citizenship and Character Education).
12. The calendar shall include at least 42 consecutive days when teacher attendance is not required unless the school is a year-round school or the teacher is employed for a term in excess of 10 months. At the request of the board or the principal of the school, a teacher may elect to work on one of the 42 days when teacher attendance is not required in lieu of another scheduled workday.

13. The school calendar shall include a plan for making up days and instructional hours missed when schools are not opened due to inclement weather. Such make-up days shall be designated on the school calendar published and distributed by the school system.

Legal References: 36 U.S.C. 106(d); G.S. 115C-12(33), -36, -47, -84.2, -105.21(b)(2), -238.31, -288; State Board of Education Policy GCS-G-001; *N.C. Employment Benefits and Policy Manual* (most current version), North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/district-humanresources/key-information>

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

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