



NEW HYBRID CALENDAR

2020-2021



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What makes this legal?

It has been an Arkansas law for years. Please see Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-108 Twelve Month School Year. Allows your school board of directors to establish a 12-month schedule with the condition the school cannot have any vacation last longer than 7-weeks and students must attend the mandated number of days (178).

Why should we change when we have always gone to school on this calendar?

We could continue to use the same calendar we have always used but in today's society we have to be willing to think outside the norms to help our students of today be prepared for the world of tomorrow. The calendar we use today was originally designed to have kids out in the summer to work on farms.

Why do we have to go a year-around calendar and shorten kids' summer?

We aren't going year-around and the students will still have a seven-week summer to enjoy. With this change we will simply spread the year out allowing our students and teachers to have intermittent breaks without actually adding any additional days to the calendar. Students will still attend school in nine-week intervals but they will have rejuvenation weeks built in which will allow for other educational opportunities for our students. Many of our students are ready to come back after seven weeks in the summer and most of their parents are ready as well.

How do these breaks help our kids and teachers?

Nationally kids experience what is known as "the summer slide" in many cases losing up to 40% of what they have learned during the previous year on these extended summer breaks. Research indicates that number can be reduced as much as 22% when students are not exposed to long breaks. Research also shows that student attendance and teacher attendance is better with this type of schedule. Discipline issues are reduced, graduation rates rise, and in many cases academic growth is experienced. These breaks, known as intersessions, provide students and teachers the opportunity to absorb what they have learned over the past nine weeks and for teachers to evaluate where their student's greatest needs are for the next nine weeks.

What about athletics and extracurricular events?

These events, games, and practices will continue as they have in the past. During the intersession weeks if your student participates on a team or club they will continue to practice or take part in those events just as they have during holiday breaks for years. Schools in Colorado, Georgia, Texas, Florida, and California have used these types of schedules for years.

What about kids that want to work during the summer?

That's great and they will still have that opportunity. Many employers understand when they are hiring students that they will be returning to school at some point. Our students will have more opportunities to work during the fall, holidays and spring with our intersessions, when other students that would be competing for the same job are still in school. This will also give them an advantage with employers knowing they will be able to utilize them more throughout the school year itself.

What happens to students that travel to ASU Mid-South for technical courses?

Our students will continue to be able to take these courses at ASU Mid-South. In discussions with the university, the courses being offered would not change so our students would still take them at the same times they do currently. The university allows students to purchase a parking pass and drive themselves to the courses and we have a couple of our students taking advantage of that this year. We provide the bus that picks up students between Magazine and UAFS and that service would continue even through the intersessions.

What about childcare for some families?

Some of our faculty will remain open during intersessions, just as it does now throughout the summer months, other than the regular closings they do for the holidays. We are also in the process of developing two programs for this. One is a list of pre-qualified high school students that wish to earn money during their intersession breaks for childcare services and another is the potential of developing a self-sustaining type of Boys & Girls club. We have also been presented with the opportunity to work with the Booneville Boys & Girls Club. They have mentioned an interest of being open during our intersessions for our parents that wish to utilize their services.

What about summer camps, especially ones that a student can get scholarships or national recognition by attending?

We are proud of the accomplishments of our students and would never hold them back from an opportunity such as a National Convention or scholarship opportunity. Most of these programs are completed by the third week of July but if students or a student has opportunities presented to them for either of these, we would definitely do what is best for the student. They may have to complete course work through google classroom to return up to date with the other students.

Will this affect our maintenance division by shortening their summer?

It will require our maintenance director to schedule and develop his department's projects in a concise logistical manner. We have already been in discussions to determine the flow of projects and our needs as a district. The staff in maintenance and custodial are both on 240 day contracts so we are here throughout this time anyway. We

are very fortunate to have a staff that is dedicated and efficient in what they do. With proper planning, it will be a seamless transition.

How do we currently track student achievement and what will be the indicators that the new schedule is a success?

We use multiple measures to track achievement: ACT Aspire testing, Classroom assessments, Response to Intervention progress reports, I-Station reports, attendance, discipline, I Ready, Dyslexia program and screeners, ACT assessment. We will use these same indicators to determine progress and success of our new schedule. Doing reading test at the end of school and then when they return will show if we have affected their summer slide and how much.

Are we locked into this for multiple years?

Our goal is to give this opportunity to work which would require three to five years of consistent data to truly determine its success. The state does not require us to “lock in” for any specific period it is at the discretion of the local Board to make that decision.

Added Advantages!

*Another added advantage is the ability to have four parent/teacher conferences throughout the year as opposed to only two. **We plan to have a parent/teacher conference the fifth week of each nine weeks.** This will serve multiple purposes; it will allow our parents to know in the middle of each nine weeks where their student is academically and develop more lines of communication with our parents. It will give students an opportunity to make an impact on their grades before the nine weeks is finished and will identify students that may need to take advantage of the intersession openings to fill their gaps. Students will not be on campus the days of the parent/teacher conferences, which will be a mid-nine weeks break for them and will not require teaching staff to put in two full days in one as we do now.*

Students will be able to share their desires for enrichment opportunities at the beginning of each semester, which will in turn give the administration the opportunity to schedule programs for them that otherwise, might not be available for them during the current school calendar.

Students, staff and their families will have opportunities to travel and spend different times of the year taking advantage of seasonal opportunities they cannot with our current calendar.

In the event our district must take snow days, they can be made up during one of our intersession weeks or other days we plan not to have students on campus (p/t conferences).