

Marion adopts hybrid school calendar

School board approves change for 2020-2021 school year

By the Evening Times News Staff
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Students and staff in the Marion School District will be on a new calendar when summer break comes to an end later this year. Last Thursday, the Marion School Board approved a plan to put the district on what it is calling a "hybrid" school calendar.

While not exactly a "year-round" school year and not the traditional "long-summer" school year, the new calendar will feature extended breaks throughout the school year and a shorter summer vacation.

After conducting several surveys with staff, students, parents and leaders in the community, Marion School Superintendent Dr. Glen Fenter made a final pitch over the proposal to crowd of stakeholders, parents and community members at the Marion Performing Arts Center last Monday night ahead of the school board meeting.

Fenter presented both the hybrid school calendar and staggered start times plans to the audience of about 120.

The two proposals were presented as ways to potentially improve academic outcomes and college readiness based on standardized testing. Fenter said better schools would drive an improved quality of life in the city.

"The most important factor that Marion continues to evolve to is based on one single factor, the quality of the public schools," said Fenter.

The Superintendent stressed the same number of school days for students under the hybrid academic calendar. Fenter indicated that both research and common sense called for redistributing breaks throughout the year. He said some summer vacation days would be shifted under the plan.

The proposed calendar added two weeks to fall break, offered the same Thanksgiving and winter breaks, and added a week of spring break.

The hybrid calendar took aim at reducing the "summer slide" with students forgetting some of what was



Marion School Superintendent Dr. Glen Fenter taught in the previous grade. The calendar also offered a chance for students and teachers to stay fresher with more breaks across the year. Poll results from faculty and staff, parents, and students showed

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Brawley: "

MPO Study Director says Arkansas side of the river's fate in the hands of TDOT with bridge project

By John Rech
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The West Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization finished with its series of first quarter meeting with a run-through of road improvement projects for the next generation.

Work to re trash picki

West Memphis getting cleaned up, say city leaders

By John Rech
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Last Tuesday, West Memphis Mayor Marco McClendon and City Engineer Amanda Hicks thanked sanitation workers for getting the city much cleaner. Hicks noted the improved results came with a cut in overtime hours in 2019 compared to 2018. Public Works commissioners heard the latest on the fight last month against unsightly garbage with an emphasis on unscreened commercial Dumpster bins. Commercial Sanitation Supervisor Robbie Amos reported the first month efforts to corral Dumpsters.

"I'm in the process of finding designated places for all Dumpsters sitting out in the open," said Amos. "I've check procedures with

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most favored the calendar change.

At Thursday's school board meeting, the board approved the move to the hybrid calendar. The board did not approve the staggered start time proposal.

It was that plan that produced the most division in those who took the survey. The survey results for the staggered start time produced closer splits, with opposition for ringing the first bell for secondary students (7th

through 12th grade) at 9 a.m. and dismissing for the day at 4:15 p.m. Parents and students cited problems with getting non-driving older students to school, after-school activities, and other issues in explaining their opposition.

The school district is faced with adding 15 new school buses, with a \$2 million price tag, to address logistical issues of getting students bussed in without long rides and very early pick-up times. In addition to the bussing costs, Fenter presented

research that demonstrated older students perform better with more sleep.

Fenter was confident in the potential success of the new calendar.

The

"Some people are saying we will lose students to school choice if we make these changes," said Fenter. "They said the same thing before we went to magnet schools. We've gained students both years since magnet schools."

The superintendent said faced with a choice between a bigger school

system with school choice students opting in and a better school system, he'd take bet every time.

"You see the improved results these changes could bring," said Fenter, "if you're in charge, don't you have to try?"

Fenter said the hybrid calendar is something they are going to take time to evaluate, with a three-to-five-year period to provide an opportunity to see what results the change brings.

OLD BRIDGE



July 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			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	31	

August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						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	31					

September 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		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			

October 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				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	31

November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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					

December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		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	31		

Students begin July 27, 2020 and Finish June 4, 2021

2020 School Year 2021

Teacher Inservice Days

July 20-24Staff Development
September 28Staff Development
January 4Staff Development
March 12Staff Development

Holidays/Non-Student Days

September 4No School
September 7Labor Day
Sept 28– Oct 9Fall Break
November 23-27Thanksgiving
Dec 19-Jan 4Winter Break
January 18MLK Holiday
February 15Presidents Day
March 12-26Spring Break
April 2Good Friday
May 21No School
May 28No School
May 31Memorial Day

Grading Periods

1st QuarterJuly 27—Sept 25
2nd QuarterOct 12—Dec 18
3rd QuarterJan 5—March 11
4th QuarterMarch 29-June 4

Conference Days

ThursdaySeptember 3
ThursdayFebruary 11
1p.m.—7p.m.

These are non-student days. PTC will be held at all MSD campuses.

Legend

.....Teacher Inservice Days
(Student Holidays)

.....Student/Staff Holidays

[.....Beginning of Grading Period
]End of Grading Period

.....Conference Days

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					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
31						

February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	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						

March 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	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	31			

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				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	

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						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	31					

June 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		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			