

Spokane Public Schools

Priority Strategy #3: Balanced Calendar

May 13, 2024

DREAM.
ACCESS.
OPPORTUNITY.



Excellence for Everyone Through Equity

We believe that all students deserve access to a high-quality education that prepares them for success in college, career, and life. A balanced calendar can help us achieve this goal by providing all students with the support they need to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances.



Examples of How a Balanced Calendar Can Promote *Excellence for Everyone Through Equity*

Help	A balanced calendar can help to reduce summer learning loss , which disproportionately effects our most impacted student populations.
Provide	A balanced calendar can provide more opportunities for students to receive individualized support and enrichment activities , which can help to narrow the achievement gap. (Timely intervention)
Reduce	A balanced calendar can reduce stress and anxiety for students and families by providing more breaks throughout the year.
Address	A balanced calendar can address staff burnout .

Work Group Progression



RESEARCH



**EXPLORE
MODELS**



**HEAR FROM
STAKEHOLDERS**



SYNTHESIZE



**CONSENSUS/
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Who's in the Room?

- Certificated Staff: Teachers, counselors, etc.
- Custodial
- Paraprofessionals
- Secretarial/Clerical
- Nutrition Services
- Principals
- Central Office Staff
- Parents
- Community members
- *Students***



Considerations

Impacts on students



Impacts on staff



Impacts on Families



Impacts on community

Traditional School Calendar

The **traditional calendar** features a summer vacation of 11 weeks followed by an extended period of instructional days, with the first break coming at Thanksgiving. The winter holidays are followed by 55 instructional days before a short spring break. Spring break is followed by 40 instructional days before the end of the school year



190 days	Teacher Schedule
180 days	Student Instruction
0 days	Fall Break
10 days	Winter Break
5 days	Spring Break
11 weeks	Summer Break

Balanced Calendar

With a **balanced calendar**, students attend class the same number of days and receive the same instructional hours driven by the same curricula as students at traditional calendar schools.

A balanced calendar modifies the traditional 180-day calendar to keep the learning process continuous. Students have periodic, shorter breaks rather than one long summer break.

All students attend school at the same time and go on vacation at the same time.



190 days	Teacher Schedule
180 days	Student Instruction
10 days	Fall Break
15 days	Winter Break
10 days	Spring Break
7-8 weeks	Summer Break





What is a Balanced Calendar?

A BALANCED CALENDAR IS A SCHOOL YEAR THAT IS DIVIDED INTO MORE FREQUENT, SHORTER BREAKS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, RATHER THAN ONE LONG SUMMER BREAK. BALANCED CALENDARS CAN TAKE MANY DIFFERENT FORMS, BUT THEY ALL SHARE THE GOAL OF REDUCING SUMMER LEARNING LOSS AND IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

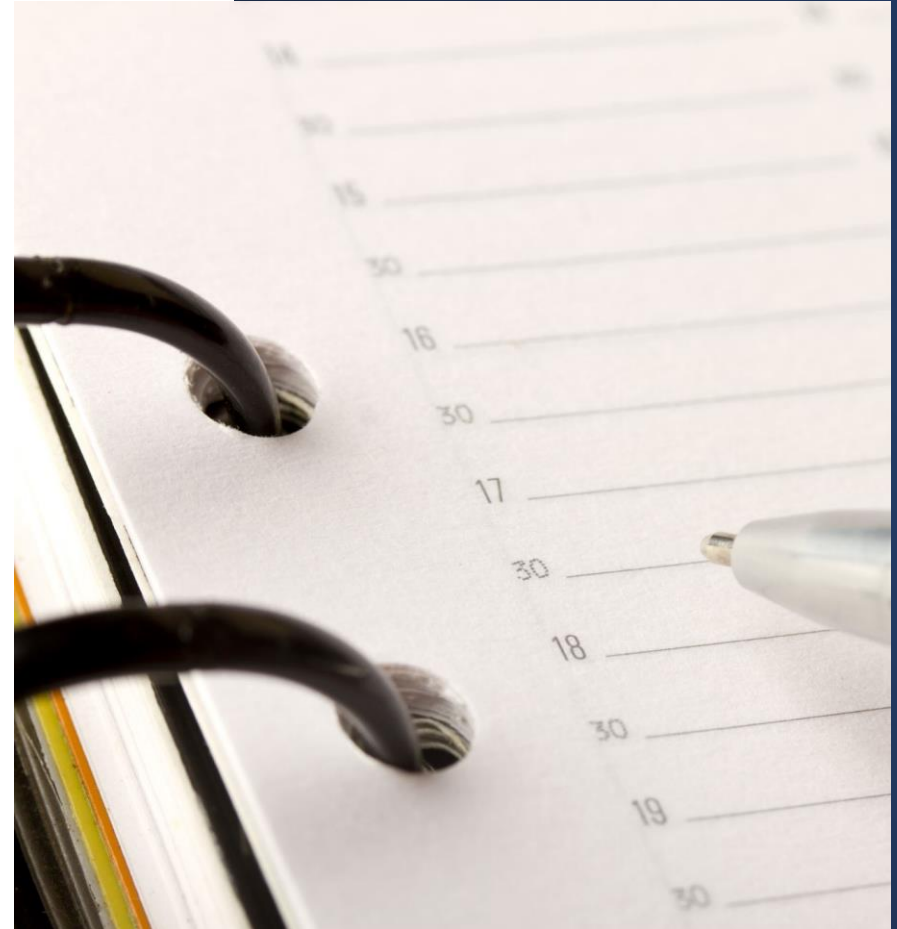
BALANCED CALENDARS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR OVER 100 YEARS, BUT THEY HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY POPULAR IN RECENT YEARS. IN THE UNITED STATES, OVER 10% OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOW USE A BALANCED CALENDAR.

How is the Academic Calendar Decided?

The academic school calendar is part of the cyclical bargaining agreement with Spokane Education Association (SEA), traditionally on a 3-year cycle. (4-year calendar)

Considerations:

- Feedback from stakeholders
- Instructional Implications
- Operational Implications



Guiding Principle #1: Communication

- **Communication:** A comprehensive communication plan will be implemented to raise awareness about how and why SPS is adopting a balanced calendar, and include intentional and timely outreach to staff, students, families, and the community.



Guiding Principle #2: Instructional Cycle(s)

- **Instructional Cycles:** SPS values whole child development and will create intentional instructional cycles to promote learning and will use thoughtful breaks to support student and staff well-being.



Guiding Principle #3: Intersessions

- **Intersessions:** SPS, in partnership with community members and organizations, will explore opportunities to provide intersessions with academic, social/emotional, and extracurricular options.



Guiding Principle #4: Continual Cycle of Improvement

- **Continual Cycle of Improvement:** SPS commits to address structural barriers that prevent equitable outcomes for students, by using research, data, and community input to inform future actions.

Next Steps...

- **2025-2026:** "During the 2023-24 school year, the District and the Association will come together to discuss the 2025-26 school calendar based on the concepts outlined in the current CBA and will be published by February 2025."
- **2026-Beyond:** The District and Association will negotiate future academic calendar years for the 2026-27 school year and beyond as part of large contract negotiations set for next spring and will be inclusive of the principles brought forth by the workgroup.

Questions?



DREAM. ACCESS. OPPORTUNITY.