

KEEP SCHOOL CALENDAR LAW INTACT

The issue: The current School Calendar Law is under threat in the state legislature. This could drastically change school start and end dates for districts across the state. Before the School Calendar Law passed in 2004, individual schools districts began and ended the school year whenever they chose, with many beginning in early August. The 2004 Calendar Law created more uniform school calendars, making it so most schools started no earlier than August 25th and ended no later than June 10th. Now some interests want to either remove the law from the books or weaken it so schools could start much earlier again.

Why support the current law?

1) It has popular support

- 71% of North Carolinians support the current school calendar law with its late August start date¹
- 80% says it's better to start school in late August than late July or early August

2) It is best for our families and students

- 66% say that ensuring students have enough time for summer jobs, camps, family vacations and other traditional summertime activities is a convincing reason to keep the current calendar law, compared to the just 24% who are more convinced by "local control" arguments
- It ensures that students and teachers have adequate opportunities during the summer months to hold down much-needed jobs. Teachers also need a uniform school calendar in order to take educational courses that are offered throughout the state.
- It gives families a chance to "reconnect" and spend quality time with extended family members who live in other school districts or in other states (most of which start school in late August or in September).
- Many families prefer vacationing in August. The current law makes sure they can do this
- Helps families plan reunions and other events when members are in separate school districts
- Students aren't forced to go to school during the hottest time of the year (68% in the poll say heat *should* be a factor when setting calendar policy)

3) It is beneficial to our economy

- 66% say helping the economy should be a consideration when looking at school calendar law
- Allowing schools to start in late July or early August could cause significant loss of jobs and income from tourism in the state
- Tourism in NC is made up of many small business; these independent businesses would be hit hardest by any change in the state calendar law that resulted in a drop in August travel
- As a fast-growing industry, travel and tourism brings over \$17 billion to our state²
- Travel and tourism support nearly 200,000 jobs in NC, providing \$4.2 billion in employee income
- In 2007, travel and tourism provided state and local government with over \$1.4 billion in tax revenue. Over half of state tax dollars go to funding our schools.³

¹ All survey data from Public Policy Polling, 9/3/08 : <http://www.publicpolicypolling.com/pdf/SchoolCalendarMemo1.pdf>

² All economic data from the 2007 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina, Travel Industry Association of America, 2008 http://www.nccommerce.com/NR/rdonlyres/98367200-6534-495C-AEEC-0449FCBA8E39/2597/2007EconomicImpactReport_TIA.pdf

³ NC Post-Legislative Budget Summary 2008-2009. http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/files/pdf_files/PLS08_09.pdf