

**INPUT ON 2005-06 SCHOOL CALENDAR SURVEY*****ABSTRACT***

*The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Board of Education, in considering the best start date for the school calendar, questioned how important certain factors in the calendar are for high schools. If factors assumed to be important were not in fact important, a later start date would be considered. In the spring of 2004, input on the 2005-06 school calendar was secured from high school students, parents, and professional staff. In addition to rating the importance of various scheduling factors, respondents were asked to look at three specific calendars.*

*The most popular specific option for all three groups was the calendar with the earliest start date beginning August 9, 2005, and ending May 24, 2006. About half of the parents (51%), 42% of the staff, and 34% of the students picked one of the other two options. The second-favored option overall was a start date of August 24, 2005, with a start date of September 6, 2005 selected least often. Factors most often cited in support of the August 9 start date included vacation schedules, exam completion before winter break, and the number of instructional days before Advanced Placement (AP) exams.*

**BACKGROUND**

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Board of Education has heard from some community members that they would like to see the school year start later. In early spring, 2004, Board members requested that input be gathered from a broad sample of high school students, parents, and professional staff (high school administrators, teachers, counselors, media specialists, etc.) before they adopt a calendar for 2005-06. High school was selected as the focus of the surveys because having semester exams before the winter holidays is a major driver of the district's early start date.

Three proposed calendars for the year were drafted as options to consider. All three met the current requirements of 180 state-mandated instructional days, ten state and federal legal holidays, ten state-required vacation days, and up to eight teacher workdays. The State legislature is now considering bills that propose a reduction in the number of teacher workdays and mandate earliest start and latest end dates for school calendars.

**Authors**

Rosemary Reichstetter  
Nancy Baenen  
Kim Yaman



**WAKE COUNTY**  
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

However, these proposals had not been made when our surveys were initiated. (Two questions on teacher workdays are particularly relevant, however.) The number of instructional days in the fall and spring semesters was also balanced as much as possible (89 days in the first semester and 91 in the second semester, or 90 days in each semester). Key features of each calendar were shared with those surveyed, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
**2005-06 Calendar Options**

Option 1	<p>Start Date: August 9, 2005 1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: December 21, 2005 Last Day of School: May 24, 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earliest start and end date</li> <li>• Full month of June off</li> <li>• High school students complete first semester exams prior to the winter break</li> <li>• Most amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May</li> </ul>
Option 2	<p>Start Date: August 24, 2005 1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: January 19, 2006 Last Day of School: June 8, 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Later start and end date</li> <li>• Most of August off</li> <li>• High school students complete first semester exams in mid-January after the winter break</li> <li>• Reduced amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May</li> </ul>
Option 3	<p>Start Date: September 6, 2005 1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 27, 2006 Last Day of School: June 20, 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latest start and end date</li> <li>• Full month of August off</li> <li>• High school students completing first semester exams in late January after winter break</li> <li>• Least amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May</li> </ul>

A random sample of 1,200 high school parents and 506 high school professional staff was drawn from files provided from the mainframe student database. For students, one Period Three or Period Four English class was randomly drawn from the North Carolina Window of Information for Student Education (NCWISE) database; since nearly all high school students are in English classes, this provided a good cross-section of 411 students across grades.

## RESPONSES

The surveys requested that participants select one of three calendar options as their preference and identify the factors that most influenced their decision. Surveys were collected throughout a ten-week timeframe in March, April and May. Parent surveys were sent in English and Spanish. Reminder notices were sent to each group in order to collect as many responses as possible. More than 1,000 participants responded, for an overall response rate of 50% (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**  
**Calendar Survey Respondents**

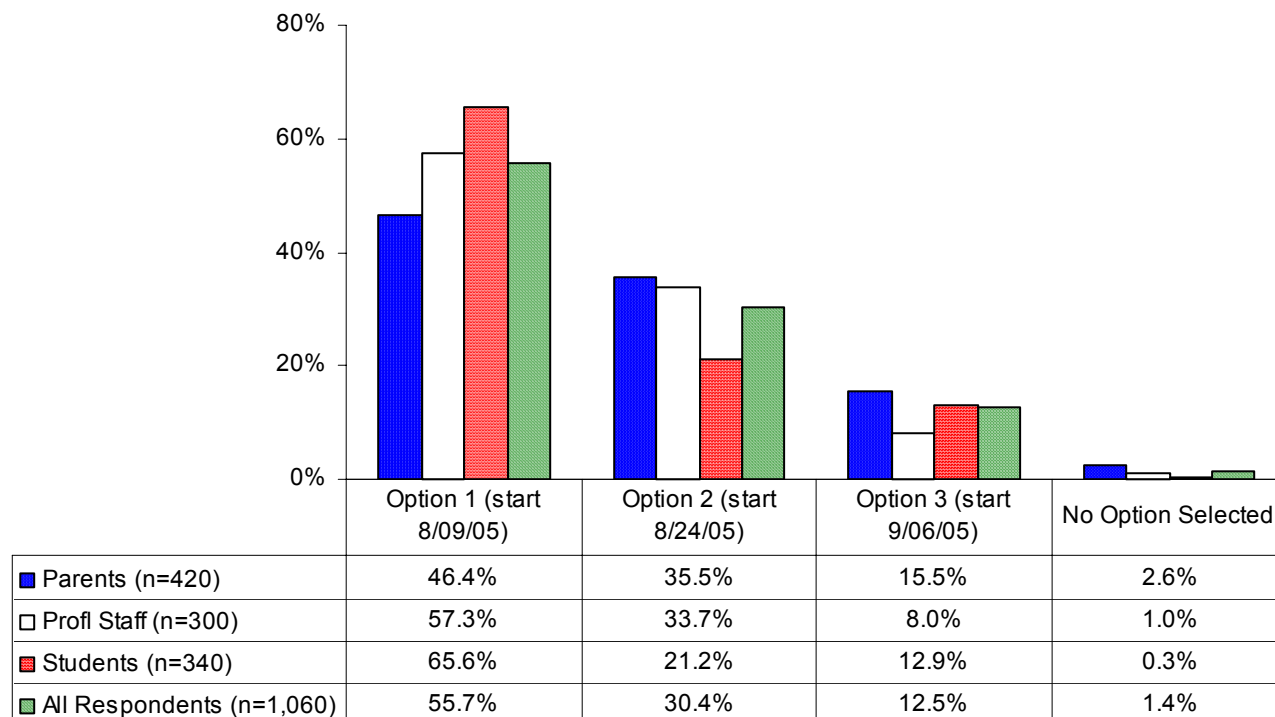
	Number Surveyed	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Parents	1,200	420	35.0%
Professional School Staff	506	300	59.3%
Students	411	340	82.7%
TOTAL	2,117	1,060	50.1%

### Calendar Option Selections

Actual items on the surveys, along with basic responses, are included in Attachment 1.

- Of the total number of parents, professional school staff, and students who responded, 590 (56% of the 1,060 respondents) selected Option 1 (August 9-May 24). Option 1 was the favored choice by each group (parents: 46%, students: 66%, staff: 57%).
- The second favored selection overall was Option 2 (August 24-June 8), with 36% of the parents, 34% of the staff, and 21% of the students preferring this option.
- Option 3 (September 6-June 20) was the least favored option by all three groups, with 16% of the parents, 8% of the staff, and 13% of the students selecting this option (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3**  
**2005-06 Calendar Selections**



**Influencing Factors**

Respondents were asked whether various factors influenced their calendar selection. Factors included student job plans, camps and other plans of this nature, family vacation plans, exams before winter break, and the number of days of instruction before spring Advanced Placement exams.

When calendar choices were not taken into consideration, each of these factors (except “Other”) was considered very or somewhat important by over half of the respondents. As shown in Figure 4, regardless of the calendar preference:

- Vacation plans were of greatest importance to parents and students in making a calendar choice, while staff viewed the number of instructional days before AP exams as of greatest importance.
- All three groups responded that semester exam completion dates were next in importance.
- The third most important factor varied for each group (parents: instructional days before AP exams; staff: vacation plans; students: job plans).

**Figure 4**  
**Overall Responses to Factors Influencing School Calendar Selections by Participant Group**

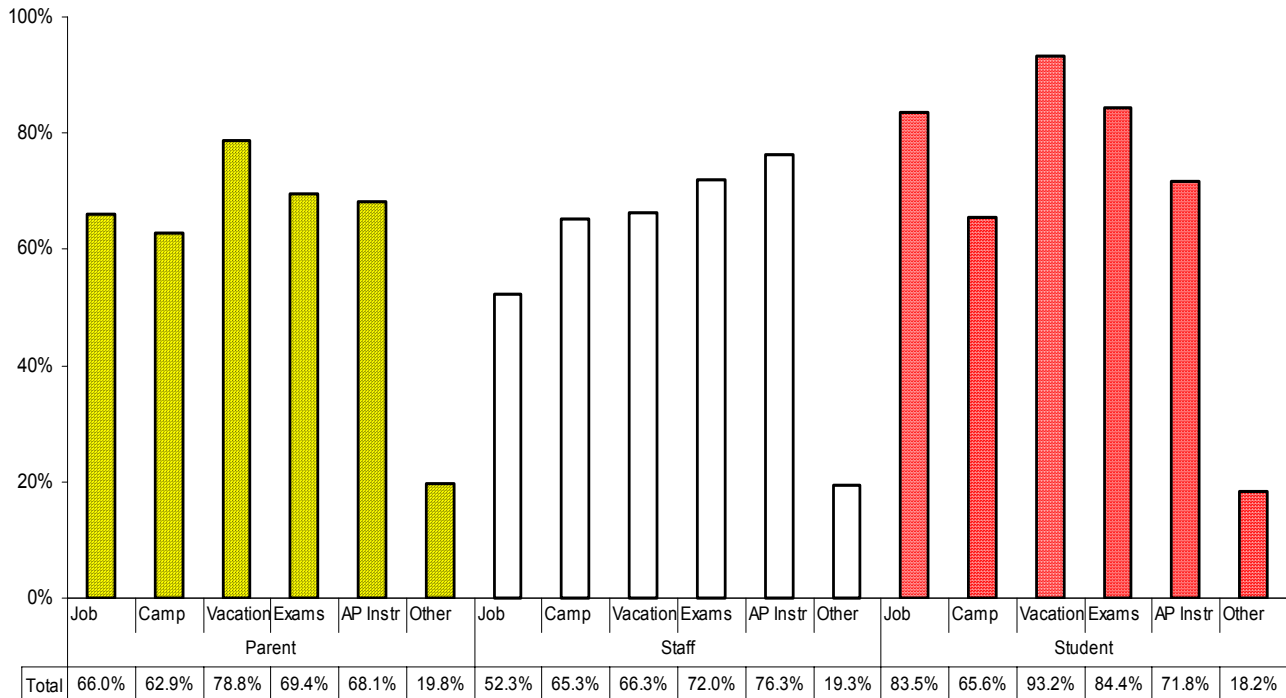
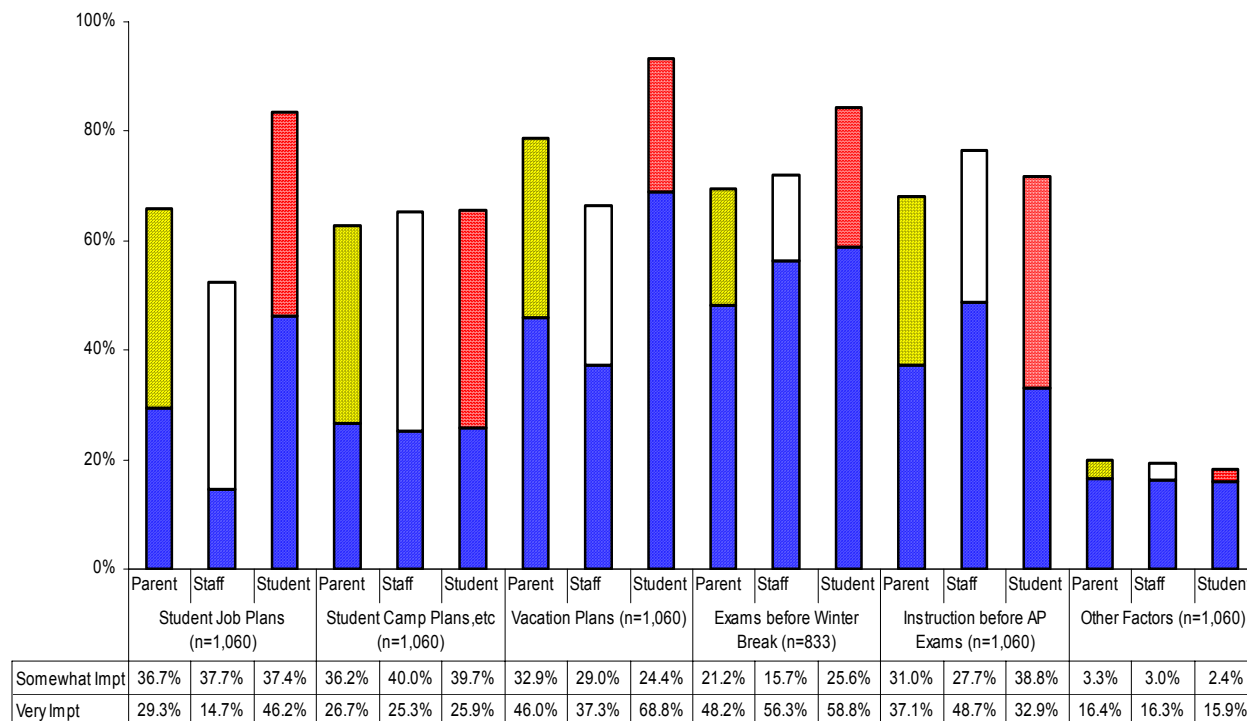


Figure 5 illustrates patterns by factor and disaggregated by whether factors were very or somewhat important to respondents.

With one exception, at least 25% of each group’s respondents cited the listed factors as very important, while (again with one exception) at least 20% from each group cited the listed factors as somewhat important in making their calendar selection. The two exceptions were attributed to staff respondents. Staff was less likely to see student job plans as *very* important (15%), although many saw it as *somewhat* important (38%). Staff was less likely to see exams before winter break as being somewhat important (16%), but many saw this as *very* important (56%).

**Figure 5**  
**Overall Responses to Factors Influencing School Calendar Selections by Factor**



\*Upper bar sections in figure represent ‘Somewhat Impt’ percentages (Parents=yellow; Staff=white; Students=red)  
 Lower bar sections represent ‘Very Impt’ percentages (blue)

**Influencing Factors to Calendar Selection**

The reasons respondents gave for selecting each option reflect differing priorities within each group. To discern the patterns, we recalculated the importance of factors for those selecting each option in the multiple-choice question. For simplicity in making trends evident, we also combined “Very Important” with ‘Somewhat Important’.

Most written comments centered on workdays/inclement weather makeup days and semester exams completion dates (see Figure 6). Professional staff offered the majority of suggestions and rationale for the planning and use of workdays with a focus on (a) when workdays are offered throughout the year and (b) the need to preserve workdays as workdays – not as inclement weather make-up days.

Less than twelve comments per group within each option were made regarding the following factors: student summer job plans, student plans for summer camp and other plans of this nature, the number of instructional days before AP exams, vacation plans, and other factors including (a) matching the WCPSS calendar to other regional/national school system calendars, (b) weather considerations, (c) family considerations, (d) staff job/training plans, (e) economy/tourism industry considerations, (f) block scheduling/year-round schedule, (g) daily start time, and (h) midweek start to school year. It is interesting to note that weather and vacation reasons were used to support both earlier and later start dates. For example, one respondent commented that

students might as well be in air-conditioned schools in August since it is so hot, while another wanted to be out in August because it is so hot. Several comments included thanks for the opportunity to voice an opinion and be heard.

**Figure 6**  
**Factors with the Majority of Respondent Comments**

	<b>Option 1</b> (8/09/05- 5/24/06)	<b>Option 2</b> (8/09/05- 5/24/06)	<b>Option 3</b> (8/09/05- 5/24/06)
Workdays & holidays, Snow makeup days			
Parents	7	8	1
Professional Staff	44	38	3
Students	0	1	0
Semester exams completion dates			
Parents	33	1	1
Professional Staff	16	8	0
Students	14	1	3

Attachment 2 provides a sample of respondent comments pertaining to calendar selections and the factors that influenced their choices.

Patterns for multiple-choice responses and the most common open-ended responses within each preferred calendar follow.

***Calendar Option 1 (August 9 – May 24):***

Option 1 was the preferred calendar for the largest percentage of each group.

Nearly all students (over 90%) who selected Option 1 considered vacation plans and exams before winter break as important factors, with most (76-83%) also selecting instructional days before AP exams and job plans as important. Overall, 95% of staff and 87% of parents selected exams before winter break as important in selecting their calendar. At least 88% of staff and 80% of parents who selected Option 1 cited instruction before AP exams as important.

The greatest number (33) of written comments made by parents selecting Option 1 centered on the importance of exam completion before winter break. Sixteen staff respondents and 14 students choosing Option 1 also added comments regarding exam completion.

***Calendar Option 2 (August 24 – June 8):***

Option 2 was the second most often favored selection by respondents (149 parents, 101 staff respondents, and 72 students).

For Option 2, vacation plans influenced all three groups the most. Student job plans were second in importance to parents and students. Staff respondents saw student camp plans as second in importance, with the number of instructional days before AP exams as a third important factor.

The most common open-ended comments for Option 2 supporters reflected concerns about matching the WCPSS schedule to other districts' schedules and concerns regarding weather.

- Among *parents*, the greatest number of comments made by those selecting Option 2 focused on concerns that the WCPSS schedule should more closely match the school calendars of other school systems regionally and nationally. Scheduling teacher workdays and weather concerns (uncomfortably high temperatures and higher school system costs related to air conditioning) followed closely behind.
- Some of the *staff* respondents selecting Option 2 also commented on the need to more closely match our calendar to other school system calendars regionally and nationally. The importance of vacation plans and the negative aspects of completing exams before the winter break were also mentioned.
- A few of the *students* selecting Option 2 made comments on the importance of vacation plans, camp and other plans of this nature, and weather concerns, usually regarding the high temperatures during early August resulting in discomfort while trying to learn.

### ***Calendar Option 3 (September 6 – June 20):***

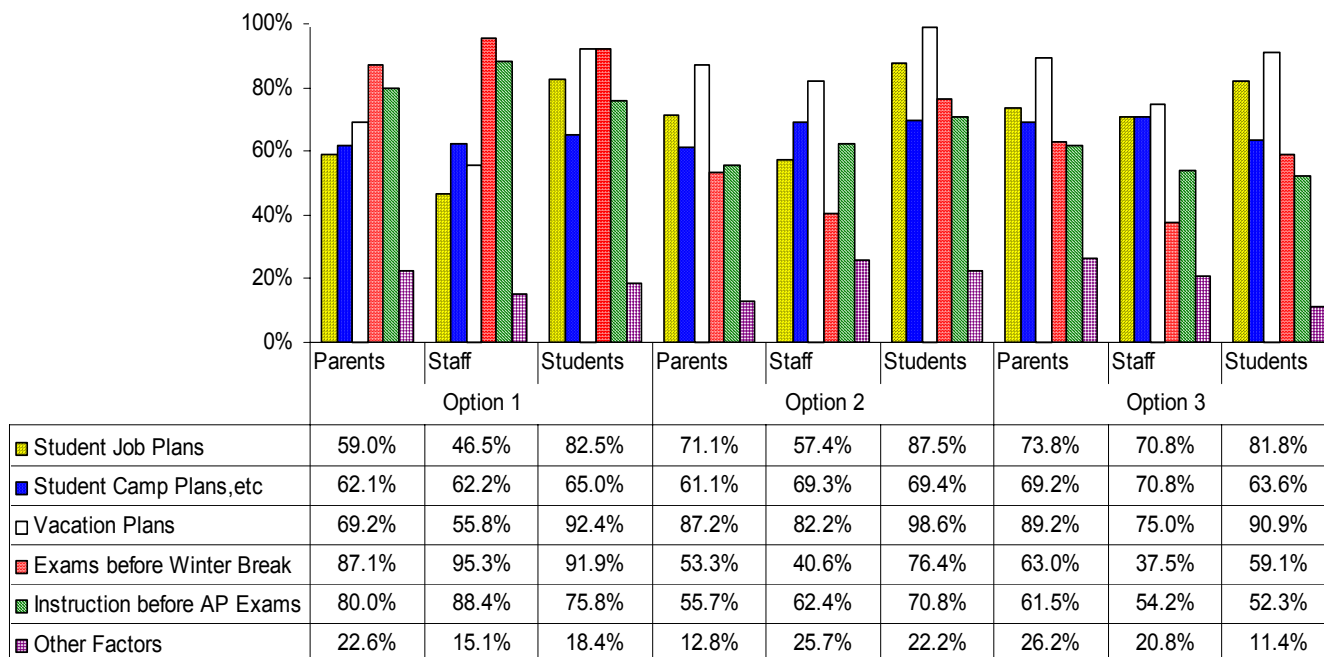
Option 3 was selected least often (preferred by 65 parents, 24 staff respondents, and 44 students).

Vacation plans influenced all three groups the most, followed by student job plans. *Staff* saw student camp plans as of equal importance as student job plans.

The greatest number of comments made by *parents* selecting Option 3 demonstrated a desire for WCPSS to more closely match school calendars of other school systems regionally and nationally, with weather concerns following close behind in importance. A small number of *staff* showing Option 3 as their choice commented on the importance of vacation plans and the number, use, and scheduling of workdays. A small number of *students* stated that vacation plans and weather concerns were important to them as factors and exam completion before winter break was not desirable.

Figure 7 shows details on the importance of specific factors to parents, staff, and students based on the number of multiple-choice responses within each selected calendar.

**Figure 7  
Important Factors Influencing Calendar Selections**



**ADDITIONAL INPUT FROM HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

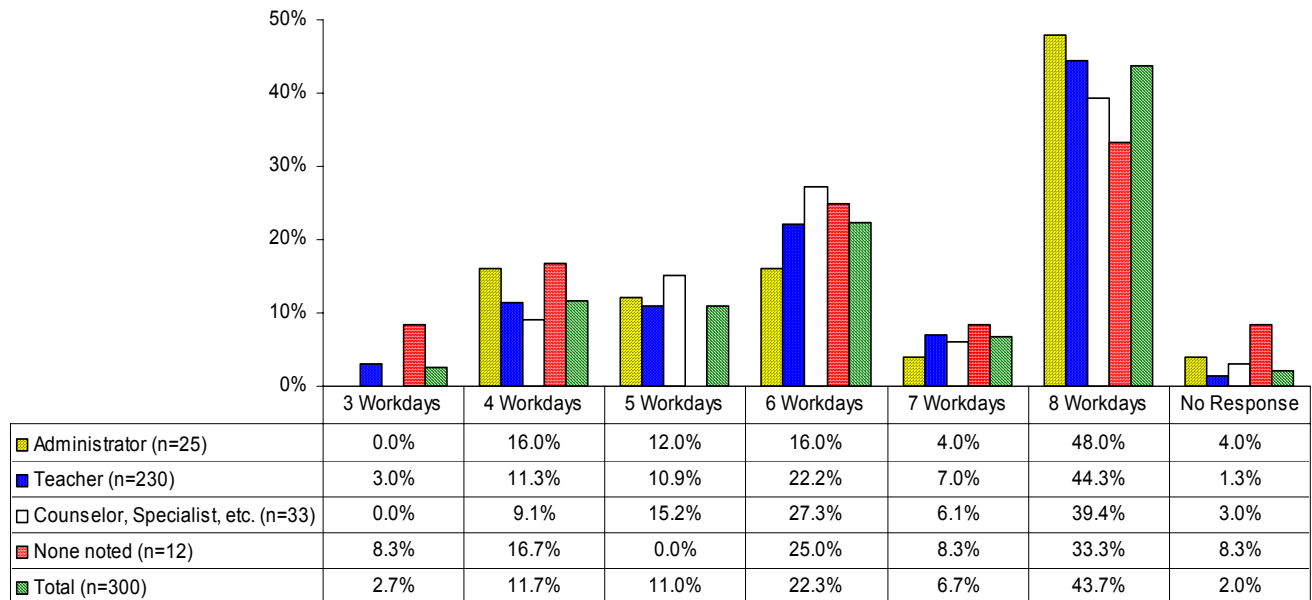
Of the 300 professional staff respondents, most were teachers (77%), with 11% counselors, media specialists, or other school-related professionals, 8% administrators, and 4% unidentified. Disaggregated response data by professional staff position is presented next.

**Workdays Preferred by Staff within Calendar Year**

Professional high school staff participants were also asked about the number of teacher workdays they prefer to have embedded within the school year. This item does have relevance to the current legislative proposals to reduce the number of teacher workdays embedded in instructional calendars. Staff respondents (44%) most commonly chose that eight workdays be embedded in the calendar (the current practice). The second most common choice was six workdays embedded in the instructional calendar (see Figure 8). Overall, 73% of respondents preferred 6-8 planning days during the school year. Eighty-five staff respondents added written comments about workdays, including requests that workdays not be used for inclement weather makeup days. Teachers cited the importance of planning days for grading, training, and administrative duties.

Preliminary results from the annual district-wide staff survey, which includes all WCPSS teachers, teacher assistants, and office/other staff, indicate that the majority of all staff members prefer to continue using workdays for make-up days rather than Saturdays, spring break days, or days at the end of the year.

**Figure 8  
Staff Preferences for Number of Workdays within Calendar Year**

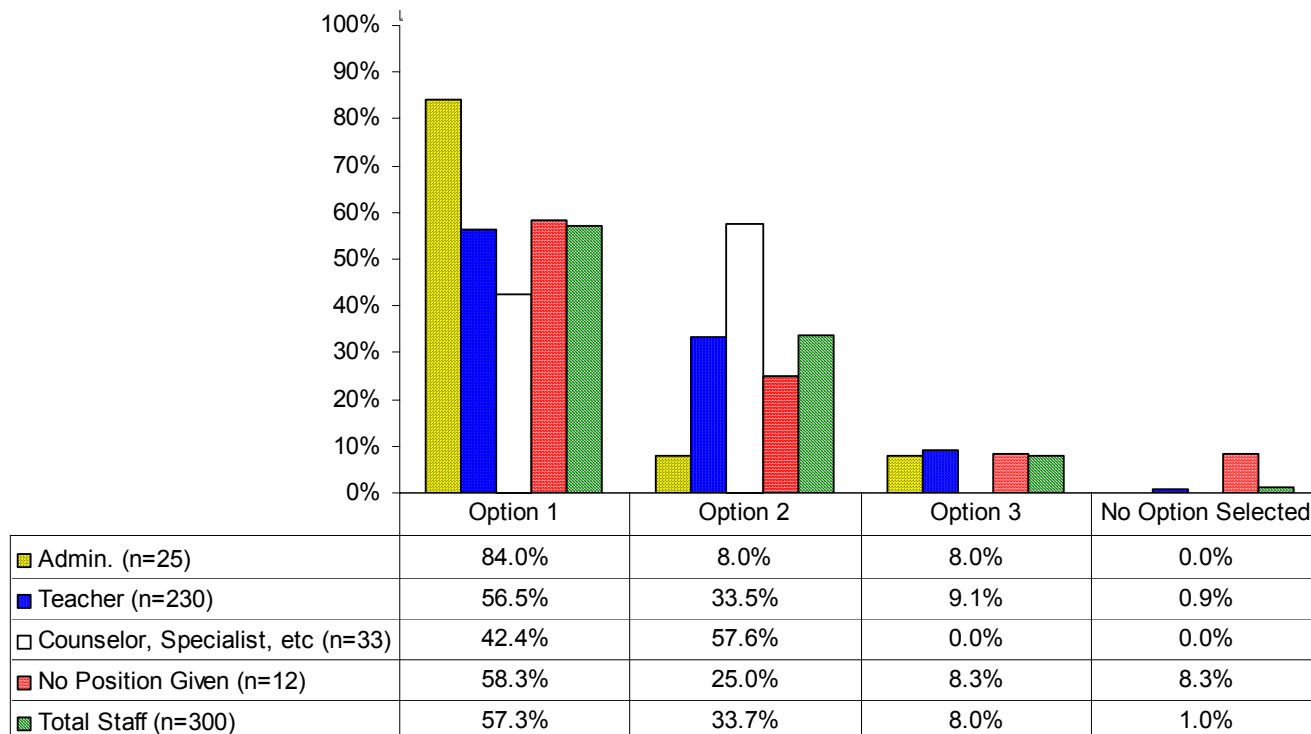


Attachment 2 provides a sample of comments by professional staff as well as parents and students pertaining to workdays and weather-related make-up days.

**Calendar Options by Professional Staff Position**

The disaggregated data showed that most administrators (84.0%) and teachers (56.5%) selected Calendar Option 1 (start date of August 9). However, most counselors/media specialists, etc. (57.6%) favored Option 2 (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9  
Calendar Option Selections by Staff Position**



**Factors Influencing Calendar Option Selection by Professional Staff Position**

Professional staff participants were asked a few additional questions beyond those of parents and students. Two additional calendar choice factors for staff included the importance of staff job plans and staff training or other plans for professional events. Neither of these additional factors was an extremely common choice among staff respondents, although training needs was a somewhat common reason for selecting Option 1 (33%) and Option 2 (27%).

- Generally, each staff group supporting Option 1 cited exams before winter break and instruction before AP exams as the most important reasons for selecting the earliest start date.
- Option 2 showed staff training, exams before Winter Break, and instruction before AP exams of equal importance to administrators as well as to staff respondents not listing a position. Counselor/media specialist, etc. respondents stated student camp plans were of greatest importance, while teachers selecting Option 2 cited staff training plans were of greatest importance in making their choice.
- Option 3 administrator supporters again showed an equal spread of importance to student job plans, student camp plans, instruction before AP exams and other factors. Teachers held that student job plans and student camp plans influenced their decision the most. No other staff groups selected Option 3 as a preferred calendar.

Figure 10 displays the disaggregated professional staff survey results regarding influencing factors based on the overall number of respondents by position.

**Figure 10**  
**Factors Influencing Calendar Option Selection by Professional Staff Position**

		Position				
		Admin. (n=25)	Teacher (n=230)	Counselor/ Media Specialist, etc. (n=33)	No Position Given (n=12)	Total Staff (n=300)
Option 1 (start 8/9/05)	Student Job Plans	28%	27%	21%	42%	27%
	Student Plans, etc	44%	37%	21%	25%	36%
	Instruction before AP Exams	<b>80%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>51%</b>
	Exams before Winter Break	<b>84%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>55%</b>
	Other factor(s)	8%	9%	3%	17%	9%
	Staff Job Plans	4%	17%	12%	33%	16%
	Staff Training Plans	36%	35%	15%	42%	33%
Option 2 (start 8/24/05)	Student Job Plans	4%	21%	27%	0%	19%
	Student Camp Plans, etc	4%	24%	<b>36%</b>	8%	23%
	Instruction before AP Exams	<b>8%</b>	21%	30%	<b>17%</b>	21%
	Exams before Winter Break	<b>8%</b>	14%	15%	<b>17%</b>	14%
	Other factor(s)	0%	9%	18%	0%	9%
	Staff Job Plans	0%	14%	15%	8%	12%
	Staff Training Plans	<b>8%</b>	<b>28%</b>	33%	<b>17%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Option 3 (start 9/6/05)	Student Job Plans	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	n/a	n/a	<b>6%</b>
	Student Camp Plans, etc	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	n/a	n/a	<b>6%</b>
	Instruction before AP Exams	<b>4%</b>	5%	n/a	n/a	4%
	Exams before Winter Break	0%	4%	n/a	n/a	3%
	Other factor(s)	<b>4%</b>	2%	n/a	n/a	2%
	Staff Job Plans	0%	4%	n/a	n/a	3%
	Staff Training Plans	<b>4%</b>	7%	n/a	n/a	5%

\*Bold percentages indicate highest influencing factors by group per calendar option



## Survey Sample

March 2004

Dear School Administrators and Professional Staff:

The members of the WCPSS Board of Education have heard from some community members that they would like to see the school year start later. The Board members have adopted the calendar for 2004-05, but would like to consider opinions from a broader sample of high school parents, staff, and students before they adopt a calendar for 2005-06. We would appreciate your viewpoint on this topic. Three options have been drafted for your review. All meet the requirements of 180 state-mandated instructional days, 10 state and federal legal holidays, 10 state-required vacation days, and up to 8 teacher workdays. The number of instructional days in the fall and spring semesters has also been balanced as much as possible (89 days in the first semester with 91 in the second semester, or 90 days in each semester). Each option has its own features as shown below. The proposed calendars are also attached. Please review the options, answer the questions on the enclosed form, and send the completed form to the Evaluation & Research Department by March 31.

Sincerely,

Bill McNeal, Superintendent of Schools

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Option 1    Start Date: August 9, 2005  
               1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: December 21, 2005  
               Last Day of School: May 24, 2006

Earliest start and end date  
 Full month of June off  
 High school students complete first semester exams prior to the winter break  
 Most amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May

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Option 2    Start Date: August 24, 2005  
               1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 19, 2006  
               Last Day of School: June 8, 2006

Later start and end date  
 Most of August off  
 High school students complete first semester exams in mid-January after the winter break  
 Reduced amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May

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Option 3    Start Date: September 6, 2005 (the day after Labor Day)  
               1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 27, 2006  
               Last Day of School: June 20

Latest start and end date  
 Full month of August off  
 High school students completing first semester exams in late January after winter break  
 Least amount of time for Advanced Placement students to receive instruction prior to the mandated dates for AP exams in May

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**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF  
VIEWPOINTS ON CALENDAR DATES**

*Use pencil or pen to complete this survey. Fill in circles completely.  
Send to the Evaluation & Research Department by March 31.*

*Fill in the circle that applies to you:*

Administrator

Teacher

Counselor, Media or other Professional Staff

A. Please fill in the circle to the left of the calendar option you like best:

- Option 1 Start Date: August 9, 2005  
1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: December 21, 2005  
Last Day of School: May 24, 2006
- Option 2 Start Date: August 24, 2005  
1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 19, 2006  
Last Day of School: June 8, 2006
- Option 3 Start Date: September 6, 2005 (the day after Labor Day)  
1<sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 27, 2006  
Last Day of School: June 20

B. How important were the following factors in making your choice?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1. Student summer jobs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Student summer camps or other learning opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. High school exams completed prior to Winter Break	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The number of instructional days before AP exams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Your summer vacation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Your summer job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Your summer training/coursework or professional events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Other: _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

C. The number of teacher workdays you feel need to be set between the first day and last day of the school year: (Any remaining required teacher workdays would then be set outside the students' school year.)

- 3
- 5
- 7
- 4
- 6
- 8

D. Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Survey Responses**

**Viewpoints on Calendar Dates**

A. Calendar Options Item: *Mark the calendar option you like best.*

		<b>Parents (n=420)</b>	<b>Professional Staff (n=300)</b>	<b>Students (n=340)</b>
<b>Option 1</b>	Start Date: August 9, 2005 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: December 21, 2005 Last Day of School: May 24, 2006	46.4%	57.3%	65.6%
<b>Option 2</b>	Start Date: August 24, 2005 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 19, 2006 Last Day of School: June 8, 2006	35.5%	33.7%	21.2%
<b>Option 3</b>	Start Date: September 6, 2005 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester End Date: Jan. 27, 2006 Last Day of School: June 20	15.5%	8.0%	12.9%
<b>No Option Selected</b>		2.6%	1.0%	0.3%

B. Influencing Factors Item: *How important were the following factors in making your choice?*

(Three choices were presented: (a) ‘Very Important’ (b) ‘Somewhat Important’ and (c) ‘Not Important’.

Combined ‘Very Important’ and ‘Somewhat Important’ percentages are based on total responses from parents, staff, and students)

		<b>Parents</b>	<b>Professional Staff</b>	<b>Students</b>
1. Student summer jobs	Option 1	27.4%	26.7%	54.1%
	Option 2	25.2%	19.3%	18.5%
	Option 3	11.4%	5.7%	10.6%
	No option selected	1.9%	0.7%	0.3%
2. Student summer camps or other learning opportunities	Option 1	28.8%	35.7%	42.6%
	Option 2	21.7%	23.3%	14.7%
	Option 3	10.7%	5.7%	8.2%
	No option selected	1.7%	0.7%	0.0%
3. High school exams completed prior to Winter Break*	Option 1	38.3%	54.7%	60.3%
	Option 2	20.7%	13.7%	16.2%
	Option 3	8.8%	3.0%	7.6%
	No option selected	1.6%	0.7%	0.3%

\* This factor was included in the survey forms sent to staff, students, and 600 of the 1,200 parents.

		Parents	Professional Staff	Students
4. The number of instructional days before AP exams	Option 1	37.1%	50.7%	49.7%
	Option 2	19.8%	21.0%	15.0%
	Option 3	9.5%	4.3%	6.8%
	No option selected	1.7%	0.3%	0.3%
5. Your summer vacation	Option 1	32.1%	32.0%	60.6%
	Option 2	31.0%	27.7%	20.9%
	Option 3	13.8%	6.0%	11.8%
	No option selected	1.9%	0.7%	0.0%
6. Your summer job**	Option 1	n/a	16.0%	n/a
	Option 2	n/a	12.3%	n/a
	Option 3	n/a	3.0%	n/a
	No option selected	n/a	0.3%	n/a
7. Your summer training/coursework or professional events**	Option 1	n/a	33.0%	n/a
	Option 2	n/a	26.7%	n/a
	Option 3	n/a	5.3%	n/a
	No option selected	n/a	0.7%	n/a
8. Other:	Option 1	10.5%	8.7%	12.1%
	Option 2	4.5%	8.7%	4.7%
	Option 3	4.0%	1.7%	1.5%
	No option selected	0.7%	0.3%	0.0%

\*\* This factor was included only in the survey form sent to professional staff

C. Additional comments (This Section C was included only in the survey form sent to parents and students)  
(See Attachment 2 for sample of comments)

(Sections C and D below were included only in the survey form sent to professional staff.)

C. (Professional staff survey):

The number of teacher workdays you feel need to be set between the first day and last day of the school year:  
(Any remaining required teacher workdays would then be set outside the students' school year.)

3	4	5	6	7	8	No Response
2.7%	11.7%	11.0%	22.3%	6.7%	43.7%	2.0%

D. Additional comments:  
(See Attachment 2 for sample of comments)

**ATTACHMENT 2**

**Respondent Comments**

Within the survey’s open-ended area are comments from 400 respondents. A number of these are of note in that they follow several themes based on concerns. Figure 11 shows overall counts of comments and sample comments within each calendar option.

**Figure 11  
Sample Comments**

<i>A. Workdays/Inclement weather make-up days (n=104)</i>			
	Parent	Staff	Student
Option 1 (start 8-9-05)	“It is important to keep teacher workdays spread throughout the year to give the students small breaks along the way....”	“Teachers need workdays throughout the school year for administrative duties.”	
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“Do you realize that 5.6 weeks is spent in off days (28 days) according to the number of legal holidays, vacation days & teacher work days? This should be reevaluated!!!”	“Please find an alternative to using teacher workdays as make-up days for inclement weather. When we lose them, we lose the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues, calculate quarter/ semester grades - we lose time to work without interruption! Thank you.”	“There are too many breaks! If you get rid of some of them, we can get out earlier in the year....”
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)	“...I am not in favor of cutting teacher workdays...”	“Needs to be teacher workday protected, not used for weather”	
<i>B. Semester exams completion dates (n=79)</i>			
	Parent	Staff	Student
Option 1 (start 8-9-05)	“We're very pleased with the semester ending prior to winter break. Keep up the good work.”	“High school students need to take their fall semester exams without the winter break creating an interruption at the end of the semester. It's a continuity issue within the classroom.”	“Better to have exams before Christmas so you can relax more”
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“Time over Christmas to study for 1st semester exams”	“Full exams before the winter break put too much pressure on students and	“I moved here from [out of state] and it was never a problem to have [exams] in

	Parent	Staff	Student
		staff. This is the main reason I chose option 2. During December students are too concerned with the holiday and activities to study.”	January!”
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)	“...additional time afforded to traditional [non AP] students taking exams after the winter break ”		“I think high school exams should take place 2-4 weeks after winter break! Then students don’t have to cram when they want winter break and students would have more time to study and do better without doing other work.”

**C. Weather concerns (n=51)**

Option 1 (start 8-9-05)	“It’s so hot in August, the kids might as well be in school with AC [air conditioning]”	“There is nothing sacred about going to the beach in August. We can go just as easily in June.”	“Having school get out in the early months of summer means is will be safer environmentally for us, and we will be in an air conditioned building in the hottest and most unsafe months ([ultraviolet] rays)”
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“Air conditioning costs...”	“It is hotter in August than June, so I'd rather work in June!”	“I want it to be choice 2 [because of] football. I like playing better in the cold.”
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)	“I think the children are more in gear with thinking about school when the weather is cooler.”	“The weather is fine.”	“I would rather be in school for the coldest days and be on vacation in August.”

**D. Calendar matched to other regional/national school system calendars (n=36)**

Option 1 (start 8-9-05)	“Coincides with Harnett County Schools. Our church youth group is half Wake County students & half Harnett County. Easier to plan summer events if these schedules are similar.”	“My daughter is in school in Durham. I might have to leave the system in Wake County if our schedules become too disparate. It would be nice if some effort were made to keep all schools in NC on a somewhat closely related	“Breaks should be the same nation wide so we can visit our friends in different states without complications.”
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	Parent	Staff	Student
		calendar. As is you could have a student start school on Sept 6th, be in school for a month, then transfer to another school that started August 9th. They would suffer and become a child left behind through no fault of their own or the teachers.”	
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“Coordination with family/friends in other US and world locations; Thanks for polling us!!”	“Those moving to this area are not aware of early August starting date.”	
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)	“The later schedule coincides more with families and friends living elsewhere in the country.”	“The number of students who enroll after Labor Day...”	

***E. Vacation plans (n=33)***

Option 1 (start 8-9-05)		“Vacation times for sanity”	“It is best to leave June and July open for students’ vacation dates.”
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“My husband’s mandatory vacation falls in August (8/2 - 8/20)”	“Being able to vacation with my mother who is a teacher in NY. Currently our school schedules make that hard.”	“I have a brother in year-round school, these dates give us more vacation time together.”
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)	“My reason for choosing this option is that we are forced to shorten our vacation.”	“Traditionally school begins in September to end in June. July and August are good times for vacation.”	“I want all of August off. Thanks.”

***F. Number of instructional days prior to AP exams (n=28)***

Option 1 (start 8-9-05)	“The first option has more benefits to education. ...to cut instructional time for AP is not a good idea.”	“I’ve been involved with AP for almost 20 years. AP teachers will not be able to adequately prepare students for exams with option 2 or option 3 and block schedules.”	“I like having the most time for AP exams”
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	Parent	Staff	Student
Option 2 (start 8-24-05)	“...Just what % of students are affected by AP classes anyway?...”	“AP review classes (Sat.) help second semester AP students”	“I like having most of the month of August off. It would be best having that entire month off but instructional time before the AP exams is important.”
Option 3 (start 9-6-05)		“Reverting back [to an] AP - traditional [schedule] would eliminate the lack of instructional days for AP courses.”	