

<p>1 full day of conferences still would not be enough, 2 full days or 3 half days would work.</p>
<p>1. Never in my 20+ years of teaching have I seen such an inefficient use of calendar time that does not provide a two-week winter break and three day Thanksgiving break. Not only is it important for employees to recharge, attendance goes down and we are left with fewer students which makes it difficult to begin/end new units. 2. There should be one EMPLOYEE from each site on the committee to develop the calendar and input sought through them IN ADDITION to this format. 3. Strongly consider the FULL day of conferences. Two early release days are instruction time wasted as students are more concerned with leaving early or do not show up at all. In other districts, an entire day of conferences is customary. Half days are archaic. 4. Consider that employees of ACPS are parents of students in other neighboring districts and the more closely our calendars align with theirs, the fewer days taken by ACPS employees to care for young children home alone. 5. THANK YOU for providing us with this format to give feedback.</p>
<p>11 consecutive weeks of summer vacation for the traditional calendar will only add to summer brain drain and add to parent expenses in having to find an additional week of child care. I do not support version 2.</p>
<p>A large majority of ACPS teachers have families outside of the DMV, making Wednesday a crucial travel day for the Thanksgiving holiday for many of us. Given the large volume traffic on this day, I would prefer to not have to travel during rush hour. Also, as a kindergarten teacher, teaching students for 5 hours (7:50-12:50) and then having conferences for 6-7 hours after that is hugely unfair. An 11-12 hour work day is asking a lot of your staff. Especially when it is 11-12 hours with only a 30 minute lunch break and 20-30 minute dinner break. Please respect your employees, especially classroom teachers, and take this into consideration. Thank you :)</p>
<p>According to format 2, employees would work 243 days (not 240). I believe this might be an error, I would be in favor of a longer winter break.</p>
<p>ACPS has too days scheduled in it's calendar. We are pushing our teachers to the maximum and they are burned out. They need off Veteran's Day, Columbus Day and the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. We also need to get out of school on June 15, 2016 as other districts. We lose teachers because there are too many other options in our area available such as Fairfax, Arlington, Prince William County, etc....</p>
<p>ACPS needs to develop a religious leave policy. As an observer of a religion other than Christianity, I have to use personal days to observe my religious holidays. There is no policy in place in ACPS for people like me to take religious leave. FCPS has a very culturally-sensitive policy which has teachers log their extra hours and take religious leave on holidays. ACPS must seriously consider something like this.</p>
<p>ACPS needs to look at a longer school day! It does not impact student learning to lengthen the year or go many days without a break. Students have more time to internalize content and knowledge when they are not rushed, especially in the elementary years. This would also solve the snow make-up day situation where teachers are losing their work days AND give teachers the same days off from school as the students. ACPS has one of the shortest days in Virginia. Please consider lengthening the day!</p>
<p>Alexandria has a diverse population and our calendar should reflect that.</p>
<p>Also, I'd really love to have Easter Monday off. When we travel for Easter, we have to cut the celebration very short in order to be back in time for school the next day.</p>
<p>Although not proposed here, I would be in favor of adding time to the school day in order to end the year earlier. An additional 20 min would make a huge difference! Please consider this option!</p>
<p>An important thing to consider with all of the random FULL DAY off days, is that when school is closed for a full day, after school programs cannot be utilized and parents must find alternate/full day care. When there are 1/2 days, we can utilize after care the the extended period. This makes it easier on working parents. As far as the calendar version 1, why do they need more than a week off between Christmas & New Years? Saturday the 23rd allows plenty of travel time before the holiday. Again, version 1 makes it harder on working parents.</p>

Apply for a waiver that would allow ACPS students to attend school before Labor Day. Teachers would have more time to teach content before SOL's and there would not be so much lag time after state testing. Alexandria city students should not be penalized by big corporations (amusement parks) trying to make a profit in the southern half of the state.

Arlington Public Schools are able to have two full days for conferences, one as an early day, so 8am-3pm and one as a late day, 12noon-7pm, in order to accommodate parent schedules. They also have Columbus Day and Veterans' Day as days off, as well as the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Yet, they end the school year the same as we do. I don't understand why if we have no school in order to have conferences, an additional day of school must be found. Since many central office staff used to be in Arlington then perhaps they can use their contacts to figure this out. Maybe we should look at extending the school day, so that we can still get out earlier in June while still giving students and teachers adequate time off for the holidays.

As a 12 month support staff person, I appreciate days off during the school year, as breaks are needed periodically. Ending the school year early won't make any difference to me, but I know that I will be outnumbered. Most folks want an earlier end to the school year.

As a dual language teacher I have to see double the amount of parents (48) and it is impossible to see them in a 1 or 2 day span. It is also not fair to the parents and this should be carefully thought out. The 1 day full preference would work if there were 20-24 parents to see.

As a teacher I really value having 3 days off around Thanksgiving and having a longer break for winter break because it's filled with family time, which is important.

As a teacher trying to fit in 25 parent teacher conferences on 2 half days is impossible; having a full day would benefit the parents who want to come in the morning but are currently unable to because the students are in class. If one full day is not possible I propose we go back to 3 half days

As a teacher who lives far from family, it is incredibly important to me to have time off in December. Not getting out of school until the Friday before Christmas means I must fly home, and it means I must pay \$200-\$300 more for my ticket and risk missing my family entirely if my flight gets delayed, etc. This is really unfair to teachers since students and parents can simply choose to take those days off. Please consider the needs of your staff and please don't punish us by making our holidays stressful when student attendance on the days surrounding the holidays will be low anyway.

As a teacher, on thing that would be nice is we used to be able to flex those two teacher work days in August and come in when we wanted. This year that was taken away. We never have control of our of our daily schedule, so having those two days in August were we could choose to come in on what worked for us was really nice. It would be great to have that flexibility back.

As a working parent the shorter Christmas break is much better.

As an elementary teacher we NEED more conference time. In grades 3-5 we departmentalize and we have 45 parents to meet with. It is impossible to do so with the current allotted time. Next month I have conferences planned for before school, my planning period, and after school hours in order to meet each student's parents. It is NOT fair that I have to use my own time, unpaid, to hold parent teacher conferences.

As an employee, I have to take leave for Columbus Day each year because I do not have child care. I don't see how Option 2 could accommodate a 240 work day contract for CO employees. If the calendar cannot accommodate a 240 work day contract, will employees get additional leave days for that year?

As much as I would love to get out earlier in June, both teachers and students need the small breaks (like Columbus Day in October) and a longer winter break during the year. This time is key to mental health for staff and students.

Because most people in this area are not 'from' this area, many of us have families out of town and need enough time during the school year to ensure that we are able to maintain close family ties and traditions, especially around the holidays (religious and secular). For most of us family is an extension of personal growth and the non-academic education of our children. Bottom line is, we will travel to be our families for most holidays, regardless of whether the school allow enough designated time for that travel - we would be grateful for ACPS to make that time adequate and official time for students to be out of school.

Both my husband work outside the home, in Washington, DC and we do not work for the government. So we do not have ANY "government holidays" off (Veterans Day, Columbus Day, etc.). So, with these days and the teacher work days (which I understand are important), the fewer days off for my boys from school (Student Days), the happier my boss/my job security. I think the earlier the school year ends in June, the better - by mid June, the students are DONE. Thank you for your consideration.

Can you make the school PD days and division PD days completely different colors? It is difficult to tell them apart unless they are directly next to each other.

Conferences are physically and emotionally draining. In order to sufficiently have meaningful conversations with families about their child's academics and behavior and brainstorm possibly solutions teachers need a full day and a half worth of time. This will help with scheduling 20 or more families over a short period of time, prepping for each conference and cuts down on the inevitable use of teacher's personal and unpaid time to host conferences.

Could you move the TWD on November 7 to November 10, which is the observed Veteran's Day holiday? Many parents who work for the federal government are off that day, so there would no be no need to get childcare to cover the day - which we have to do on November 7. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Early end of school year is beneficial for teachers and students in regards to summer school. The later school ends, the less likely kids will participate and teachers become worn and are also less likely to work summer school.

Early release for conference days make them useless as school instructional days. No learning happens so it's crazy that the state accepts them as full days. Early release days on 11/22 and 12/22 are lost days too, also because many students wont come to school. Keep them as either full days or days off because otherwise they are just wasted.

Ending earlier in the summer is a top priority for our family. We do not travel for holidays so do not need extra days off at those times. A longer weekend for a fall break would be great.

Families, particularly mothers, need time to prepare for Thanksgiving and Christmas or Winter holidays for their families. The summer holiday is long enough.

For conferences, 2 early release days does not give enough time for dual language schools to meet with parents on both the English and Spanish sides. We teach over 40 students in a day. Scheduling this year has been really tough and we are forced to use a lot of our non-school hours to meet with parents. It would be nice to have either 3 early release days or a full day for conferences. Also, it would be nice to have the first two days for classroom prep as SWAP days like in years past. This was helpful for teachers who are parents and need to pay for daycare. It gives us the flexibility to come set up our classrooms on our own time before the school year starts. Moreover, the week before school starts many teachers are already putting in those hours after the school day is over because we are in meetings for the whole day and need the time to prepare as the first day gets closer.

For the third year in a row I was unable to get time to visit with my children's teachers for a parent/teacher conference at GWMS, claim all times have been taken. That is completely unacceptable and inaccessible!

Full day conferences that end by 3:15. I do not like having a professional development day on Jan 2. I want the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off. If we want to prepare our students for the real world we need to stress the importance of a work ethic and adhering to a regular work schedule.

Getting out earlier in June would be fantastic. I teach an AP class at the high school. The test date is in early May, so instructional days in June do me and the students no good. The more instructional days before May the better in my opinion.

Given the demands of our jobs as ACPS employees, I very much value the day off before Thanksgiving and a longer winter break in order to travel to be with my family and recharge. With version 2, I am concerned that staff may feel burnt out part way through the year. I don't feel that having an extra week off in the summer adds value for me or my family and only extends the amount of time students are out of the classroom, therefore increasing the opportunity for regression and lost skills.

Half-day/early release options are not generally conducive to learning. They are regularly seen by the students as being disruptive. Parents agree that they throw unnecessary wrenches into schedules; these changes are particularly felt by either single-family households or in two-working parent homes.

Have all PDs scheduled during the time that teachers return to school in August and give us our teacher work days.

Having less than 2 weeks off for winter break is absolutely unacceptable. When the break is shortened, many students are absent on either side of the break, making it difficult to move forward in the curriculum.

Having time off for winter break is especially important for myself (and others) since we often travel out of time. I am in favor of more time off during this period of time instead of observing days like Columbus day.

Holidays and early release days are very VERY important for revitalizing and refreshing your mind so that you can go back to school ready to work.

how about ending earlier in June by starting the school year earlier like every other district in the area. Why not start in August?

How will version #2 impact the number of contract work days for current 240 employee staff? Version #2 has more than 240 work days, will our contract and pay adjust accordingly?

I also would like the end of the school year to have a full day of school instead of the early release days - therefore ending earlier.

I am a bit surprised that we are even considering going to school up until December 22nd. This year is already bad enough-Fairfax County has a full two weeks off during the winter break, but ACPS doesn't. Getting off a week earlier in June simply means more childcare for parents. For the teachers it doesn't make much of a difference at that point if we go another day or two. And regarding snow make up days-why does Fairfax county get to wave up to 13 days of instruction, but yet we are making up days #4 and #5. This doesn't make much sense. Lastly please consider having more representation on the committee from TC Williams High School. We only get one representative, yet we have over 2600 students. Thank you for your hard work.

I am in favor of anything that matches a working parent calendar, meaning kids being off when parents have the day off from school too. Usually work won't give working parents the Wednesday before thanksgiving. Also if the students have a full day off for parent/teacher conference that is a full day that one of the parents will have to take off from work to watch the kids. I prefer to observe Columbus Day off because I have it off from work where I don't have veteran's day off. In summary whatever is closest to what regular workings parents get off from work works better if that make sense. Thank you for counting on working parent's opinions.

I am not sure the Feb. conferences are needed at all. I always thought they were not well attended and it seems that the parents that do go to these are not the parents the teachers need to see. Look at how well they have been attended in the past? TC teachers are flexible in meeting parents in the a.m. or after school not sure it is worth the 2 half days.

I am thrilled with a calendar option that ends on a Friday, as I am a working parent and camp does not start mid-week ever. I also like getting out earlier in June so there is more time for vacations. Sport training starts in August, which limits the amount of time families can travel when getting out so late in June.

I am unsure which religious holidays would be added??

I appreciate being asked to give input. It is important to think of students and teachers when creating a school calendar.

I believe the students should have a 10 school day holiday break for Christmas and New Years. Neither calendar provide this. I'm unhappy with that.

I do not believe a half day on the day before Thanksgiving is a good idea. It places a hardship on schools. Many staff members will take off as they have to travel out of state to be with family. Subs are difficult to obtain especially on a day before a holiday.

I do not understand why each year we are given so many professional development/teacher work days at the beginning of the school year. It's too many and too overwhelming. Why not spread those professional development days throughout the year. We are more able to focus if the days are spread out. Plus it gives the kids much needed breaks, as well as us.

I don't care about the Columbus Day observance, but I do think students and teachers need to have a break. It is a sprint the first month of school. I think it should be 1/2 day PD and 1/2 Teacher work day. Please make PD's meaningful.

I don't feel strongly about whether or not we have school on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving or later into December. I DO feel strongly about whether these are REAL school days. If you add a half day in November or December that turns into a low attendance party day with no real learning going on, then we have made a bad trade. Regarding conferences, morning is great if it means early morning. 8am is terrific. 11am is useless for working parents.

I don't mind working the days in December, but I am very much opposed to the day in November. It would mean giving up spending Thanksgiving with family for those who have to travel long distances.

I don't think we need to go so late in June. We have always had MORE than the required number of either days OR hours. However, we do need at least 8 days off for the Winter Break. Everyone needs a break from each other by that point and one week just does not cut it. Personally, I'd like to see one "long weekend" per quarter, and a two week Winter Break become standard. I'm not convinced we need this much staff development either. One day per semester is plenty since we have so much of it at the beginning of each school year.

I don't want to lose anymore days for winter break. One week is just not enough.

I favor replacing all consecutive half days with lesser number of full days. Also, one of the teacher work days should always, when applicable, be the day after Halloween when that falls on a weekday.

I feel like we NEED to have a full day off before Thanksgiving, if it was changed to a half day the majority of teachers would not be able to go home for the holiday. Also, we REALLY need to address the fact that the end of the fourth quarter is finished MUCH earlier than the last day of school. It is so silly that we are still 'babysitting' students until the end of June. If the quarter ends, school should let out. Thanks.

I feel that days off here and there and longer breaks around holidays are helpful for bringing down stress levels for students and teachers, and that extending a bit longer into June is a small price to pay for that.

I have many concerns about these schedules. One, I know that several years ago when they asked staff what their preferences were, the majority of staff requested a full two weeks for winter break. Two, the professional time is a concern to me as an administrator. I think that the 1/2/18 PD day will not be productive. Teachers will not be engaged on that day and many will probably try to take the day off. Moreover, I have serious concerns about the new separation between school PD and division PD days. According to both schedules, there are no school PD days during the year. Unless the division is planning comprehensive system-wide PD that they will be implementing and evaluating, I feel that schools need the power to use those days for their own unique PD needs. Lastly, Columbus Day should not be offered as a day off. Anyone who studies the history of his actions can see that he is not someone to be celebrated by our school division, specifically consider the high number of students that come from indigenous cultures in South and Central America.

I have taught in many school systems and what is concerning is the "burn out" during the year students and faculty experience. Having substantial breaks through the year allows students and staff to re-energize. Teaching and learning from exhaustion is not productive. Quantity does not mean quality. Will year round school ever be considered.

I like Version 1 because of the length of Winter Break--and would rate that as very important to me. While I rated ending school earlier as "important," I would rather go a little longer into June and have a longer amount of time off in December.

I like version 2's use of 2 1/2 days to get the kids out of school earlier.

I love getting out a week earlier for summer and also am very grateful that NEITHER calendar starts school before labor day. Thank you!

I prefer the calendar where there is more time off around the holidays. ACPS staff especially deserves to have time to prepare and be somewhat settled around the holidays.

I recommend the following calendar changes: - if it is important to have the parent/teacher conferences before the end of the quarter, consider having them earlier and all day, e.g., October 20, so that students also can use the day for college visits or school-sponsored PSAT/SAT prep sessions; - alternatively, move parent/teacher conferences closer to the end of the quarter so that end-of-quarter testing is stretched out during the last week of the quarter (now it seems that my son has multiple tests in AP courses on the last couple days of the quarter - it would be better to have only one or two major tests per day); - move the teacher work day from November 7 to November 10, which is a Federal holiday, to better align with family schedules and to allow for 1) college visits and 2) school sponsored SAT prep; - if not important to have conferences before the end of the quarter, make November 3 the end of quarter, and November 7 or 10 the TWD; - make February 16 an all-day parent/teacher conference day to accommodate college visits, family schedules, and school-sponsored SAT prep; and - if current half-day formats are retained for parent/ teacher conferences, use the half day that students are not in class for school sponsored SAT prep. Thanks for considering these comments.

I strongly prefer more holidays and longer breaks during the school year. I would like to see Columbus Day, Vetrans Day, and Easter Monday as holidays for employees as well as two full weeks for winter break. The summer break is plently long and could be shorter to allow for a less stressful pace during the academic year which could result in an improved education for students.

I support fewer holidays throughout the year and ending in mid-June. I also support STARTING school in late August - this may afford more time for conferences, holidays, etc. throughout the year. I realize this is a larger issue but I have observed that more districts seem to be starting prior to Labor Day.

I support the idea of ending the school year a week earlier, but not in lieu of our other vacation time. Start the school year a week earlier.

I think both calendars have merits. For years, I have suggested the idea that TWDs should be half day for students so they can be counted in the school day. On both calendars, I would also suggest making TWD (Feb 2nd) a SMU because you know, a). few students will show up for an "extra" 2 days of school, and b). there may not be enough subs to go around if too many staff call in ill for these final 2 days. Clearly, there has been a lot of thought and new ideas put into these calendars. I like the Jun 15th end, but I also like longer holidays, so either is truly fine with me! Nice job. Nancy Runton

I think having more days off throughout the school year helps teachers not to feel burnt out. The Wednesday before thanksgiving is very nice to have due to traveling. Most teachers are not from here and enjoy going to spend more time with family.

I think it's important to have at least ONE day off each month (i.e. one long weekend) and the calendars have adhered to that pretty well these last few years. Love the option of getting out earlier in June! Keep up the good work!

I think it's very important to take in consideration that many families and staff travel for the holidays. Not having a full day off the day before Thanksgiving makes it difficult for people to travel. Also Christmas break is 3 days shorter from previous years which again impacts traveling as well as providing students and teachers with an adequate break. Surrounding districts continue to have 2 full weeks off for winter break.

I think the two half days for conferences we have this year are not quite enough. I will most likely end up scheduling the conferences I cannot get to on the Wednesday before they begin after school or the following Monday after school. As for the rest of the proposed calendar, I think the break in December on version two is great, but I think we should have off the day before Thanksgiving in November. Many people travel to their families for Thanksgiving and it's nice to have Wednesday to do that.

I think the Wednesday before Thanksgiving should remain a holiday because that is a travel day for families like mine who visit out-of-town relatives. December 22 should remain a holiday, again for travel purposes. I think the conferences should be held on one day if feasible, although that may be overwhelming for the teachers.

I think version 2 is more convenient for families with two working parents while some of the days off in version 1 do not align with typical working/federal holidays.

I travel during the winter break. I really need the days to fly out, fly back and recharge! I prefer longer breaks during the school year as opposed to getting out of school early.

I voted for version 1 even though I would prefer an early June summer break. I feel the winter break in version 2 is too short and not worth ending the school year early.

I will try to make myself available with an early notice for any teacher conference..

I work at Mt. Vernon Community School and given our special circumstances with the Dual Language Program - we are struggling to be able to hold all conferences with parents over 2 early release days. Please change it back to 3 early release days.

I work during the day so evening conferences work better for us.

I would be happy having one full day for conferences, if there was another day given to teachers in its wake. If not, I would prefer early release days.

I would greatly prefer to move up the start date before Labor Day, so that school starts during the last week of August. I hate giving up part of the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and working right up until Christmas, but I also HATE the fact that we are in school past the SOLs and after everyone else (almost) has gotten out.

I would like to have two full weeks of winter break, so I can be more mentally prepared. My plans to visit my family better suits my needs during that time.

I would like to see the Monday after Easter as a holiday or teacher work day.

I would prefer early morning (7:30-9:00).

I would prefer not to end the school year earlier in June as it is a major family expense to pay for camps. I prefer having the longer Christmas holiday which is important family time for us.

I would rather add a vacation day instead of having a whole day off for conferences which would add another student day with the possibility of losing a vacation day. When I give parents the option of coming in during my planning period or lunch period I never have those time slots taken in my 17 years with ACPS. My parents ask for late afternoon and early evening conferences. Knowing my student population I know that many parents are not home on early release days. They come home at their regular time so it is safer for my students to be in school rather than being home for 6.5 hours unsupervised. They are also feed two meals on early release days.

I would really like for the committee to look at the number of hours. Teachers need to be compensated if additional minutes are added to their contract.

I'd be willing to go an extra day before winter break in order to have Easter Monday off. Many families (including mine) travel that weekend and it's a huge challenge to get back in time for work/school on Monday.

If it is a great difficulty for a particular teacher to do late conferences, I am open to coming earlier for that teacher. But generally there should be later afternoon and evening options for working parents if the teacher can do it.

If we are ending within the same week of June I'd prefer to have more breaks throughout the year. Can we please consider moving to a calendar similar to Fairfax? They have many more teacher work days and holidays and yet they end their year at the same time.

If we are going to get off an entire week over Easter/Christmas holidays then we should in some way observe the holidays of growing Muslim community, particularly 2 Eid holidays. At this point, students do not even get excused absences for missing...Seems like a cultural competency/equity issue.

I'm also in favor of starting before Labor Day and ending late May/Early June. Additionally, I think unless you plan on acknowledging holidays of all major religions, you should not recognize religious holidays. Only Federal Holidays. And perhaps election days as a safety precaution.

In considering a full day of parent conferences, would there be a full day off for teachers to make up for the loss of planning time? Regular breaks help me be a better teacher- more creative, more present, more relaxed. I don't need my time off in one large chunk in the summer, and students definitely don't need the time off in the summer as much as they need breaks during the school year. We are so much more productive after a day off, or a snow break.

In favor of more breaks during the year. Year round school is my preference. Wouldn't mind starting before labor Day

In the current system, teachers also get to leave at 1:15 on the 2nd day. Under the new idea, we'd work the extra hours on the 1st day and have a regular school day on day 2. Extra work and no time off. No thanks.

Is it possible to make a hybrid version where the Wednesday before Thanksgiving is off and the Thursday/Friday before winter break remains a work day/early release?

Is there any discussion of moving the school day to starting at 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. and going until 3:00 or 3:30 - releasing students at 2:30 is a hardship on almost all working families and leads to overcrowding and crazy conditions at the aftercare programs at the elementary schools! Students would be able to sleep later and parents would have more after school options. Thanks!

It is difficult to come up with a calendar that meets the needs of all stakeholders. Thank you for your work on this project. In addition, because many folks travel over Thanksgiving it is difficult to take that day away without having a lot of teachers calling in sick that day. Perhaps the Division should consider making the Wednesday before Thanksgiving a flexible "work from home" day. This would allow folks to do grading etc. from home or do these jobs during their travel time. Thanks,

It is vitally important for employee equity that ACPS change its HR policies to allow make up leave for employees who need religious leave. If this policy won't happen, then Jewish and Muslim holidays should be added to the calendar as days off from school.

It would be great if TWD or Professional Days could coincide with Columbus Day/Veteran's Day/Election Day etc. I feel that is important to keep the Wednesday off before Thanksgiving. We live in a highly transitional area with family primarily residing in other places. To have school on this day, merely checks a box to count it as a day - but it's not a day of learning. You'll have more teachers calling out "sick" that day resulting in the inability to staff them appropriately with subs. Please don't do this. Same thing with the winter holiday - we are far to transitional here. It's not like it was when we went to school. The end of school should remain where it is. We need to decrease the gap of summer break to help increase knowledge retention. There are kids who rely on school breakfast and lunch to be fed - heartbreakingly true. There are kids that come to school because merely, it's a safe place and it keeps them out of trouble or whatever else. I hear that teachers are done teaching after the SOLs so this time is viewed as wasted anyway. I don't have a great answer, but I love our current schedule!

It would be nice if we could work in having Easter Monday off.

<p>It would provide parents with more options to schedule conferences. Some parents are able to come in during the early morning, so we would be able to allow those parents to come in, meet teachers, and still be able to go to work if needed.</p>
<p>It's a challenge for ACPS teachers to go almost 3 full months before getting a day off at Thanksgiving break. Additionally, if teacher workdays could be held sacred instead of the snow make-up day, that would better support teachers' emotional state. Teachers should be recognized for all their hard work, and when a teacher workday is removed due to snow, all that work for report cards, which typically takes more than one day to complete, needs to happen on their own time. Instead, could we just add a few minutes to the day for the year as a backup plan for snow make-up days?</p>
<p>It's easier to get time off in the middle of the day or in the evening. It's more difficult to find child care for morning conferences. If child care was provided during conference times, that would make a day off more palatable.</p>
<p>keeping the current model of early release allows student half days to the academic calendar otherwise you will need to find away to make up the days which may cause the June ending date to be longer.</p>
<p>Let's move away from the antiquated agrarian calendar to one that has more frequent breaks!</p>
<p>Like longer breaks at Christmas and last day of school around June 20th like it has been. Definitely like starting after Labor Day</p>
<p>Make it like FCPS!</p>
<p>Many people living in this area are NOT from this area. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving is ALWAYS a travel day for my family. Given traffic on this day, I would prefer to not have to travel, with my children, making a long drive home much longer.</p>
<p>Might opt for full Day off for student conferences but depends on how late conferences would run?</p>
<p>More than anything else, we teachers needs more time to teach. Why Alexandria City Schools has the shortest school day in the state when more and more is being added to grade level curriculum, beyond me. What do I care about ending school one week less when the amount of content remains the same.</p>
<p>Move 12 Professional Development days to before school begins for students or incorporate early release days. Keep 4 TWD. End school at the beginning of school. Return to 2 week winter holiday.</p>
<p>My husband and I are both teachers in ACPS and we have a toddler who is in daycare. Our daycare provider is closed on both Columbus Day and Veteran's Day. We do not have any family in the area, so one of us is always forced to take a day off on one of those days. I am sure that we are not the only people in this situation. I feel that this should be taken into consideration when making adjustments to the calendar. Also, considering that there have been consistently more than three snow days being used the past few years, perhaps it would be a good idea to build more snow days into the calendar. Other districts in our area build more snow days into their calendars, so perhaps we should follow suit.</p>
<p>My husband who works for Arligton public schools has two full days for conferences and is able to meet with every parent. It's good for the morning people and the night people. If we are able to get just one full day it would be so helpful. If you really think about it. We have the kids until 1pm (after buses leave). Then we begin the conferences. That eliminates most of the day right there- not a true half day. It's dismissing an hour and a half early. Therefore, if you are a teacher who really cares, as we all do or this wouldn't be our job, we schedule early mornings all week to meet the needs of parents and we stay late because two half days doesn't cut it for availability.</p>
<p>Need to reconsider having a PD day as the first day back from a holiday break.</p>
<p>No matter the version, two changes must be made. April 20 cannot be a snow make up day because that is a teacher work day. Teachers must be given the professional time they need to grade student work. Second, SAT School Day must be an early release at TCW if we will be participating in this again. Holding hundreds of non-testing students in the auditorium for 7.5 hours with just 2 licensed teacher chaperones by the end of the day was a total debacle. We should never permit such neglect again.</p>
<p>Option 2 seems to cut June 20th off the calendar entirely, just FYI.</p>

Other divisions manage to meet required days without cutting winter vacation, Thanksgiving and ending mid-June Why can't ACPS?
Our school calendar should mirror the neighboring counties, especially with Columbus and Veteran's Day - OFF.
Please adopt Option #1 as I feel, as a long-time employee, that the days at Winter Holiday break are essential for out restoring our energy and over-feeling of well-being.
Parents work....no one comes in the morning. Everyone wants a late evening conference. Also, as a kindergarten teacher, teaching students for 5 hours (7:50-12:50) and then having conferences for 6-7 hours after that is disrespectful to your dedicated employees. An 11-12 hour work day is asking a lot of your staff. Especially when it is 11-12 hours with only a 30 minute lunch break and 20-30 minute dinner break. Please respect your employees, especially classroom teachers, and take this into consideration.
People strongly appreciate the days off prior to holidays (Thanksgiving, winter break) due to travel etc.
Please also consider moving spring break to after Easter, so that spring break starts on Easter weekend. Having Easter at the end of spring break makes family celebrations more challenging if travel is involved.
Please consider having a full two weeks off for the winter break. I understand that this means adding days at the end of the school year and changing a teacher work day to a regular school day.
Please consider teachers who travel for Thanksgiving and Christmas, who would not be able to do so if you require an early release day on the days before these holidays.
Please consider that if more days off could be around Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter breaks that would be better. A lot of times, it becomes difficult as a teacher, (Woman teacher) to prepare for those breaks in terms of getting things prepared (cooking, traveling, etc) for our families.
Please do not add a week to the summer break. Working parents then have to find a way to cover an extra week of child care, at great expense.
Please do not shorten the Winter Break. So many families travel out of state for Christmas. Having only a week off (and new years day) is way too short. These kids need a break and so do the families.
Please do not use teacher workdays as snow make up days.
Please don't make the calendar any more disruptive for working parents. For example, please consider decreasing the number of TWDs on the modified calendar. They are too random. Also for Tucker families, intersession buttressed up next to spring break is VERY difficult, particularly if you don't enroll your child in intersession. That's three weeks out of school. There has to be a better way.
Please give me Easter Monday off or the week following Easter off like schools up north. Also would love schools to start before Labor Day!!!
Please go to seat HOURS instead of days so we can reduce the amount of days needed. FCPS and surrounding districts do this... why are we so behind???
Please include a half day in October to accomodate the PSAT/SAT suite of assessments. This day could be the first day of parent-teacher conferences at the High school. I chose to explore a full day of parent conferences (student holiday) since turn out for my high school parents was very low. WHILE i chose that an october holiday would be great for teacher since we have no days off until November, I think increasing instructional time by condensing the school schedule is more valuable. The SOL and AP schedules do not change and creating more instructional days earlier in the year is more important to me. I would also advocate to petition to the state to move our school year to an earlier start if possible.
Please let the kids out earlier in the summer. The time after SOLs feels like wasted time, and they will still have plenty of that time after the tests.
Please look at Fairfax's calendar. There is no reason they should be able to honor holidays such as Veteran's Day for students and staff, have all (or more) days off than Alexandria, absorb more snow days, and still end at the same time or earlier each year. Are we begin held to a different standard?

Please look at the placement of District PD days. Placing them on a holiday is not a good way to increase attendance or fidelity in the training. Especially when surrounding districts and day care's follow other schedules. Please try to find other days when those trainings can take place so all staff can be excited to attend and actually take advantage of professional development. Thank you!

Please make spring break consistent every year in mid-March and remove it from the Christian holiday of Easter. The latter is an antiquated approach and should be eliminated in a diverse community like Alexandria! Respect all religious practices by eliminating Easter-break. Make it a winter break in mid-March!

Please move the teacher work day in Nivember to align with Veterans Day. Having it on another day puts strain on parents that have to find childcare on these off days. If on a federal holiday, at least some parents that work fir federal government will already have it off.

Please please don't take away our Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and also a longer winter break is much needed and appreciated. We need time to refuel during the school year, going a few more days at the end is not that big of a deal.

Please put the ridiculous PSAT/SAT day in October as a half day on the calendar. The schedule at King Street this year on October 19 is a horrific. Adding half days to the calendar for next year would result in no work being done those days. The majority of high school students would skip and staff would take the days off.

Please recognize that many ACPS families have dual households. The typical parenting plan in VA involves some sharing of the academic winter break period. Version 2 makes it very difficult for divorced families to divide that time because it would be so short. This is especially true for children who have no other family in the area and who would otherwise travel to be with their extended family. I would submit that giving all families enough time to observe the winter holiday (a celebratory time for the vast majority of ACPS families, I would guess), should take precedent over ending the school year earlier in June when there is nothing particularly compelling happening.

Please stop reducing the winter break. It's already shorter this year and makes it difficult to travel any distance to be with family.

Please, please, please add in additional professional days for division and school-based training. With the lack of subs, it is very difficult to attend extended trainings and the professional learning in needed. It is too hard to attend every workshop in the after school time frame. Thanks for your consideration.

Prefer more time off at Thanksgiving + Christmas to accommodate long travel time. Also prefer TWD following the end-of-quarter to accommodate grade completion. Thank you!

Prefer to have holidays during academic year. Rather than ending school year earlier.

Professional Development days for teachers need to be more useful and effective. Much of the pre-service week and Oct 10 PD day at TCW was a complete waste of time.

Providing Campagna calendar availability information would be helpful to make decisions and provide comments on potential academic calendar changes, especially for those students/parents that attend Samuel W. Tucker Elementary that has the modified calendar (which we enjoy).

Recognizing the major holidays of our diverse student population (127 countries and 115 native languages) is critical to Strategic Goal 1B: "An Inclusive organizational Culture:Every student will develop habits and attitudes that reflect the principles of cultural inclusiveness, civic responsibility, and ethical and respectful behavior."

Since I'm a veteran, I would definitely like to see Veteran's Day observed as a holiday.

Students and teachers need breaks. A change in a week at the end of the school year is not worth going an entire year with fewer breaks. Teachers get more time to plan better lessons (yes, we work a lot when we're on "vacation") and kids come back refreshed and more ready to learn. The other, better option if fewer/shorter breaks are given, is to implement Dr. Dingle's idea of giving teachers every or every other Wednesday morning time for planning.

Taking away the two week break at Christmas and replacing it with a shorter break really adds nothing. Staff and students will just take extra days off so it really doesn't add any more valuable instructional time. Teachers and parents need this time to decompress and recharge their batteries. The same goes for holidays that have become teacher workdays. Just leave the holiday a holiday for everyone and have a separate teacher workday. Fairfax county does it and they are more successful than ACPS.

Teacher Work Days BEFORE the start of each quarter. A natural break. A chance to analyze data. A chance to re-fuel and plan as a teacher. Just a thought. In general, I am a much bigger fan of calendar #2.

Thank you

Thank you for asking about conferences - I've always wondered about why 2 early release days instead of 1 day off.

Thank you for asking for our input.

Thank you for considering an earlier end date in June.

thanks

The day before Thanksgiving is one of the highest travel days and many teachers and families travel to other states to celebrate with family. I think it is important for teachers and families to not have to travel on that day.

The days immediately after back-to-school night and parent-teacher conferences should either be OFF for teachers or delayed-start. It is EXTREMELY draining to meet with parents all evening, then go home to grade papers and make plans, then try to teach the next day. The staff is noticeably non-functional after these extended workdays.

The days on calendar 1 are wrong. November 1 is a Tuesday, but the calendar says it is a Wednesday.

The difference between these two calendars is simply when meaningless class time is being spent. The day before Thanksgiving is no more productive than the day before school gets out in June. ACPS should do away with the three extra days on the calendar that keeps kids in the classroom two weeks past the end of SOL's.

The first option is the most workable and is consistent with prior year calendars. The second option would be a nightmare for families (and employees) who might need to or want to travel in the November and December holidays. Furthermore, ending school a week early in the summer would be more easier troublesome for working parents. Stick with version one.

The kids already have too much time off in the summer, so I don't support an earlier release in June. They return to school in the fall having to re-learn much of what they learned the year before, leading to wasted time and redundancy. This harms low-income kids more than higher-income kids, b/c the latter can afford to attend enriching summer camps and travel. If anything, I'd rather see a much shorter summer break balanced with more mini-breaks during the school year.

The kids need the summer to get jobs, attend camps, etc. The schedule this year is really limiting opportunities for the kids - learning is more than school. Camps and enrichment programs start a full two -three weeks before our kids can attend. Very poor planning, in my opinion.

The last week of school has become a huge waste of time for students and teachers. Once SOL's are over, it seems as if instruction stops as well. I like a couple of days off throughout the year - like Columbus Day - but 1/2 days are not my favorite. They are hard to manage for child care.

The only reason I support Option 2 is the fact that school ends a week earlier. The lateness of the school year ending greatly hinders summer opportunities for our children. Much more preferred than losing time at Thanksgiving and Christmas break would be to apply for the waiver for starting school a week earlier - just like Fairfax County and numerous other school districts have done.

The parent conferences in February for the high school are not necessary. Attendance was extremely low last year and most of the staff do not understand why we are taking time for these extra conferences.

The school year should end earlier. June 22 is too late and by this time the students and teachers are tired and are no longer learning.

<p>The slightly shorter Christmas break is preferable as is the mid-June ending of the school year. Please do not add another full day off for conferences. It is very hard for working parents to accommodate the multiple days where there is no school. At some point it would also be great for school to start before Labor Day.</p>
<p>The Wednesday before Thanksgiving should always be off because many teachers and students take off to travel. With so many people out, not much academic learning will take place. Teachers will have to reteach the lessons because so many students will have missed class. A full day off benefits everyone.</p>
<p>Two full weeks off are needed for Christmas/winter break!</p>
<p>Unlike other districts that have numerous days off in Oct/Nov, we do not have any. Keep the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off. We need the break and it allows for people to travel home. This is crucial. We should look at aligning with Fairfax. It helps out all the teachers who live there and their calendar is always way better than ours.</p>
<p>Version 1 I feel best accommodates family needs for Thanksgiving and winter break.</p>
<p>Version 1 puts HS students at a distinct disadvantage for academic internships and for college prep vis a vis private schools and other public school districts that can start before Labor Day and get out earlier in June. Most parents in Alexandria are dual working parents. Thus, later parent teacher conference times are best for working parents.</p>
<p>Version 2 gives more consistent teaching time around fall/winter holidays!</p>
<p>Version 2 is great!</p>
<p>Version 2 is terrible for families and employees who might want to see family over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays</p>
<p>Version 2 would make every teacher hate their job much more. Please don't do that to us. I would not have time to go home to visit my family for either Thanksgiving or Christmas. Honestly, I think you should be looking at year-round school options instead. Students need less time off for summer, and teachers need more meaningful breaks to come in fresh and awesome for students. I have spoken to many teachers who would agree that a year-round schedule would be better.</p>
<p>We don't need an even longer summer break.</p>
<p>We have too many school days. We go to school more days than our neighboring districts. The days we attend school do not coincide with student achievement data. No days off until November adds to teacher burnout. Adding time to the school day rather than days should be considered.</p>
<p>We need to look into adding 6 minutes to each instructional day so that we are at 180 days of school instead of 183. That makes the most sense to me.</p>
<p>We need TWO full weeks for Winter(Christmas) breaks!</p>
<p>Where is the option of 2 full weeks for Winter break? bring back this option as it is important culturally for many of our students and many students travel to latin america at this time anyway. Why would we need a longer summer for more opportunity for the summer slide, especially are low income students.</p>
<p>Why do staff have so many extra professional development/ TWD?</p>
<p>Winter break should remain as 2 weeks off or beginning on weds off.</p>
<p>Wish we could start before Labor Day! Would love 2 weeks of Winter Break!</p>
<p>Would also be open to after-school/night-time conferences!</p>
<p>Your dates for Version 1 is very misleading (and actually wrong)on this page. June 23 is a Saturday, so it can't be the last day of school. It is actually June 20. As far as snow day make up, adding student days AFTER SOLs seems like a bad use of student time. It works better to take away teacher work days so that I can make up for lost time BEFORE SOL tests.</p>
<p>Your survey presents the last day of school as June 23 in Version 1 and June 15 in Version 2. This is inaccurate, it should be June 20 in Version 1. This is an issue because it misleads people about the length of shortening of the school year in Version 2.</p>