

2012-13 Calendar Development Survey Results

Survey Start Date: 30-Jun-11
Survey End Date: 11-Jul-11
Total Responses: 2840

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Survey Title: 2012-13 Calendar Development Survey
Report Type: Bar Graph
Start Date: 30-Jun-11
End Date: 11-Jul-11
Completed Responses: 2840
Response Rate: Public Survey

Q1. What is your relationship to Albemarle County Public Schools?				
Responses	Count	%	Percentage of total respondents	
Parent	1990	70.07%		
Student	157	5.53%		
Employee	596	20.99%		
Community Member	97	3.42%		
Total Responses	2840		20%	40% 60% 80% 100%

Q2. Please rank the three draft calendars in order of your preference, with "Rank 1" being your first choice, and "Rank 3" being your third choice.			
Responses	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start	529	346	1965
Draft 2 - Aug. 13 Start	662	1995	183
Draft 3 - Aug. 22 Start	1649	499	692
Total Responses	2840		

Survey Title: 2012-13 Calendar Development Survey
Report Type: Conditional
Start Date: 30-Jun-11
End Date: 11-Jul-11
Completed Responses: 2840
Filtered Responses: 1990

Conditions Applied

Q1. What is your relationship to Albemarle County Public Schools? is **Parent**

Q2. Please rank the three draft calendars in order of your preference, with "Rank 1" being your first choice, and "Rank 3" being your third choice.			
Responses	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start	310	236	1444
Draft 2 - Aug. 13 Start	453	1418	119
Draft 3 - Aug. 22 Start	1227	336	427
Total Responses	1990		

Q3. Other input or considerations:

There is no way I can find child care for a 2 1/2 week winter break. That is ridiculous!!! I would rather have Aug. off than May. Thanks

In all 3 options, I appreciate the end of the school year coming in May, rather than mid-June. I prefer the slightly shortened Christmas holiday of drafts 2 and 3 - in draft 1, 2 weeks and 3 days is far too much time away from school. I think starting in early to mid-August can interfere with summer plans for many students, as many camps run into August.

I would probably rank draft 1 and 2 almost evenly. Draft 3 is significantly further behind because of the testing/ grade period schedules and the fact that breaks are shorter allowing for less flexibility for travelling to family, vacations, etc.

The Xmas break is too short on all calendars.

I don't care what start date you pick but PLEASE get those kids out of school at Memorial Day or end of May. Extending the calendar into June really stinks, the kids are checked out of school once the warm weather hits.

My children will make less money for college if they start school in early to mid August. The summer is the only time they can work because of their heavy course load.

I cannot fathom why the School Board is considering starting school any earlier. As it is, I feel as though our children are starting back to school much earlier than in years' past. I noticed that with the "earlier" scenario, children are also released from school in May, rather than mid-June. Has the County considered the impact of this change on local businesses that cater to out-of-school kids, i.e. camps, day cares, etc.? Their schedules will also have to change to accomodate the early release/early return, not to mention parents' schedules, particularly those juggling summer care with full time employment and who have gotten into a routine. I am definitely NOT in favor of the early release/return.

We are very opposed to the early start date. We would prefer to start after Labor Day. August is hot in Virginia and I cannot imagine that the early start date would not add to cooling costs.

Strongly object to revamping entire K-12 calendar in order to accommodate desire to have certain high school classes have a final exam before holiday break. Do not accept at all the idea of testing driving everything about the schools.

The way that summer activities are scheduled-- even on a national level (we are a swimming family-- the national end-of-summer meets are generally in the Aug 8-15 range) would leave us zero vacation time as a family and cause our children to either miss school or miss the key summer swimming meets.

All spring sports, drama competitions,...still continue thru June. Students would be out of school but still need transportation to/fro for practices/competions. Not a good atmosphere. North Carolina schools tried this and last year went back to a late August start time; early August-not successful. Cooling costs, summer employment is hurt by early August start.

The half day before Thanksgiving is BOGUS!!! Just take the whole day off.

Both of my children swim year round and some of the National meets are iin the 1st two weeks of August so if school starts in early August they will miss the first week of school.

Draft 1's calendar is RIDICULOUS! Starting August 8 kills summer vacations and greatly interferes with sports training for sports like football, that require 4-5 weeks of training before the first game. And a 19-day winter break is WAY too long and disruptive to learning. If this draft passes I am taking my kids out of public school and putting them in private school. ABSURD. Can't believe you're even considering it. Likewise, Draft 2 is seriously flawed. It still starts school too early and it has school ending on May 17! Are you kidding?! If I didn't know better, I'd think you created Drafts 1 and 2 to ensure people vote on a reasonable schedule, which is Draft 3 (otherwise, you've all gone insane). It is the only one worth doing.

Draft 1 is my least favorite as it cuts into our summer the most. I think it is important for students to have time off in the summer. As a parent of elementary school age children, I feel very strongly that they need time to play and learn how to have unstructured time. They are free to pursue other interests during the summer at their own pace. I think it is very important to have a very solid block of time during the summer for the kids to regroup and refresh and spend time with their families.

Draft 2 starts on a Monday, but the others on Wednesday. If Draft 3 (my 1st choice) started on a Monday, we might be able to finish before Memorial Day. Just a thought...

This is horrible drafts. I like the after Labor Day start

I am happy with the schools calendar now, I just really wish we could see kids getting out earlier(in the year)

The summer break should be as long as possible. Kids need the break, families need vacations, and we all need some downtime.

What ever happened to starting after Labor Day??? Seems like these kids get a very short summer break all around. Rest, relaxation and rejuvenation are important to the development too.

I don't like ANY of the choices. I would like to see schools start after Labor Day so that my family can enjoy vacation together in August/Sept. Definitely, the first two proposals would cause my children (who are in elementary, middle, and high schools) to all be pulled out and missing a week plus of school during August. I'm not filthy rich like so many Albemarle residents that I can fly off to the Carribean, etc. I'm stuck with the Virginia and North Carolina beaches at best and they are too cold in June. What are you guys thinking!

I'd prefer more vacation days during the school year at the cost of the length of the summer holiday.

I prefer the latest start date. However, with only 3 days of school scheduled for after Memorial Day, I'm not sure effective that would be.

We strongly disagree with the plan of sending the children to school during the August summer heat. We dislike the plan altogether and cannot see any advantages in the proposed changes.

What about May 31st on the third calendar?

No start before 22nd. The air conditioning at AHS and SMS is barely functional during the late weeks of Aug. there are many rooms at AHS in the front/back ect of the school that are over 89 during the day. Old gym has no AC.

Draft one is a nice schedule for families and teachers.

I think that starting school earlier does not do anything for the students. For the most part, their minds will be on other activities that friends are doing outside of school. Also this severely cuts down on the prime family vacation month of August. An early start will mean a lot of absences. The Aug 22 start I think minimizes "in school year" breaks which are hard to find baby sitting services for during the year for working parents. The other two provide too many scheduled days off in the calendar. Routine is good for the kids and teachers. The third draft(August 22 start) provides the continuity that is needed. All three end the school year in appropriate fashion.

I do not care for how early Spring Break is in March on any options.

It is hard to know what the advantages are. The web site reads "During the work session on February 24, 2011, the Albemarle County School Board expressed interest in exploring the possibility of starting school earlier beginning in the 2012-13 school year." But it gives no reason. For this to happen, camps will need to adjust schedules. Also, will this put us out of synch with the rest of the state, causing inconvenience for parents who may work in other school systems? I see no reason for this whatsoever - please make an argument for it.

It's ridiculous having the kids start back so early!! That is still considered summer in my mind. I am also adamantly opposed to NOT having vacation contiguous to the Easter Holiday. Why on earth wouldn't we?! You do realize that many of us are Christians and we not only celebrate this holiday but most travel to meet family to do so. I find this proposal insulting!

I'm not sure how most parent's feel but I feel the longer the kid's are out of school the longer they have to for get some of the thing's they have learned so it seems like to me not only is it hard on the students but the teacher's has well because you have at least 18 studend's in a classroom and not all of them learn the same so you have teachers help those kid's catch back up while the other kids don't get to learn all that they may want to learn that year and then they start to get bored with School.

I taught in Florida for several years and we always started early-mid August. The kids enjoyed getting out in May!

August is still so hot and it is difficult for the younger children out at recess, riding the bus home, and I greatly prefer having August spent at home with my children. It would be very inconvenient to be out so early in May. It still isn't warm enough to swim or do other "summer" activities. The surrounding schools are not out of school for the summer and it really offsets the summer break when you have friends/family in other counties. I would much prefer school to actually start in Sept, the first Tuesday after Labor Day, and go later into June. I also appreciate having a full two weeks for Christmas Break. Thanks for letting us offer our input! I really appreciate that. :)

Please consider what impact would this change have on fall sports. For example football teams usually have the month of August to prepare for the upcoming season. For that matter, what about the spring sports? How would this effect eligibility? Aren't there attendance and academic criteria that need to be met for players to be eligible to play? How would this be determined when school has let out already? With spring regional and state tournaments running into early/mid-June in Draft #2 those student-athletes might have to stick around to attend practices for as much as a month after school has ended. I don't see why you don't just go back to the way things were a couple years ago. Mid-terms were done by Christmas then.

I see no advantage to starting earlier and ending earlier except the semester being completed prior to the winter break

I like the idea of getting out before June. As far as I can tell, my children aren't doing anything the last two weeks of classes (they report "it's just a party, Mom") and I would just assume take them on holiday before ticket prices go up after that May 31 cut off date. Aug. 8 is a bit early, but by Aug. 13 they are ready to return to school anyway.

Let the kids enjoy their summer, and allow for family vacations. You are already starting before labor day, don't make it any sooner.

Alot of families have planned vacations first two weeks of August. Early June is sufficient to get out of school.

Go year round before starting us on August 8th - no one wants to start that early. Summer camps and vacation is easier to get in August. No starting in early August - I would rather start after Labor Day !!

what happened to starting school AFTER labor day? starting sooner in our august heat is absurd.

Draft one is more in line with college schedules and still allows for appropriate breaks during the school year. It also would have students in High School taking exams before winter break and spring break.

I fail to see the reasoning behind changing. As a student, I loved having my christmas break to study for midterms. The students I know now have expressed the same opinion. Also, August is a great time to visit extended family or vacation with them. Most of our cousins who live far away do not go back to school until the last week of August or until Labor day.

A decision on this as soon as possible would be nice for those who have always planned family vacations in Aug. This would have to change vacation travel for many, many people, so the sooner the announcement can be made the better for staff and families and students' families.

Not even close. Numbers more accurately reflecting our family would be (using a 1-10 scale) 8/8 = 10; 8/13 = 8; 8/22 = 1. The Christmas break in the 8/8 version is absurdly long. Why do you mess with such a good thing?

I strongly oppose the early August start dates. Not only does it break with tradition (and traditional vacation patterns), but it will also increase the costs of air conditioning during the hottest month and expose children to more sun and skin cancer dangers on the playground (particularly given that most parents forget to put sunscreen on during school). In addition, it is out of sync with natural light patterns and kids will be up late and completely exhausted during school. Finally, many kids will have summer camps and lessons that have not finished by the first of August, so you jeopardize other local programs. Horrible idea all around!

Draft 3 allows high school students to work to save money for college. The winter break needs to be two weeks and simply extend into the first week of June as usual. Thank you.

I like the idea of the grading periods ending before the winter and spring breaks. I also like the idea of ending before Memorial Day Weekend.

Starting any earlier than August 22nd is complete nonsense. There is no reason for kids to be going to school during 100-degree early August days. Nor is there any reason for kids to be done with school in mid-May. I have no idea why anyone would think Draft 1 or Draft 2 would make any sense.

While I support a long break for Christmas, I think the Draft 1 break is too long. However, the proposed winter break for the remaining options are not long enough given the later end of the year and still possibly pouring into June in the event that snow days amass. I also have issue with tacking on all of the snow days to the end of the year, given the rarity of teachers who are actually covering new teaching materials after SOLs/final exams. If the snow days are tacked on to the end, then this needs to be addressed or the kids need to be exempted from those days without penalization. I love the idea of a March spring break that coincides with the end of a grading period. How will the summer before this change be addressed?

My son will be a senior that year. Starting so early in the summer will make it more difficult to have a family vacation

August 8 start too early for families and staff. Very disruptive for summer break. Also, winter break is too long (1 week and 2 weekends is enough). Long break bad for retention. Keep August 22 start. Students and staff are best prepared to dig in and work in end August. Early to mid august is still "summer" mode for most folks and their extended families.

My daughter has Premier SOCA team camp for her team on that first whole week of August. I like that the Spring break is the week before Easter on the later start date.

As a parent of HS students who have to study for exams over break and who experience "dead" time after AP/SOLs...I strongly support the earlier start dates. Thank you for taking the time to consider this change.

why the push to start earlier?

Draft 2 seems the best calendar for addressing the teacher concerns I have heard about with the current calendar. Our kids will get a better amount of time to complete course work before taking required standardized tests. It looks like early dismissal days allow the teachers to have more time for completing report cards but days still can count towards state requirements. Normally assessments seem to be completed by the end of May and both draft 1 and 2 seem to allow for more teaching time and less "baby sitting." Make-up days in June are not at all in line with "best practices" for what we want for our kids. Glad this is being looked at early!!

An Aug 8 start makes it difficult for students to have many summer jobs (for instance, as a lifeguard or camp counselor) or to attend camps or enrichment programs. Aug 13 is only a bit better. Since we are tied to the UVA calendar via our work, it is most convenient for our calendar for the school year to start around when UVA is gearing back up.

I have a sibling who teaches in Texas. For many years they adopted the early start model. After years of new students not attending until after the middle of the month they changed their schedule back to a middle of the month or later start. If you adopt the early start model how will you address this issue. It does not sound like a big deal but it truly created mayhem , not a good way to start the year. We do have a percentage of students wh move into the area every year

Entirely too long for winter break for Draft 1; the kids get bored!

Current June instructional days after SOLs and exams are useless. Kids just kill time after exams till the end of the school year. It would be beneficial to have more days earlier in the school year to fit in more instruction before end of year exams.

having the full two week break at the holidays is so civilized and realistic. It really brings families together to kick off the second part of the school yr.

I think it is a good idea of starting school ealier in the year. This creates more instruction time which students will benefit from.

I strongly oppose "Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start" because of the winter break lasting from Dec 21 to Jan 8. It may be logistically and financially burdensome for working families needing to secure childcare for such a long period. It may present problems with instructional momentum (i.e., there may be a need for more "review" than usual) because when the students return on the 9th, it will have been 20 days since they have been in class.

I am a ACPS parent and a teacher in Fluvanna. We have been using a calendar similar to draft#1 and it works well for the SOL testing windows. I think all area school systems should work together for a regional calendar. It is hard for camps, churches, sport leagues, and schools to share resources with such diverse calendars. Fluvanna changed its spring break to line up with yours. Do you really think ACPS should change the week with the new calendar? I would like to work with you. Here is my email dbaber@mail.fluco.org.

We like the current schedule better than the proposed schedules. It is WAY to hot in August to go back that early. Spring Break in April is preferable to March.

I would really prefer a post-Labor Day start date, but of these choices the early August start (Aug 8) has the most attractive schedule.

Draft 1 will work the best for us.

I like that option 2 and 3 have fewer days during the year when the schools are closed. This makes it much easier for working parents.

August 8 start date is way too early. Thanks

The idea of beginning school earlier in August is absolutely absurd. I would not even rank them if the software would allow me not to.

May 13 too soon to let out, And the winter break in draft 1 is way too long.

The earlier starts don't work at all for us. We both work and if the public schedule moves up, the alignment with the preschool/daycare break schedules will disappear and we'll not be able to go way as family without both pulling kids out of school AND paying for the missed days anyway (at the preschool). Bad for my kids, bad for my wallet. Keep it the way it is.

My family has two children very happily and successfully in the public school system, and one in the private school system. The private school system follows the Sept 1 - early May calendar. It works much better for us to have the two congruent, so the latest start and earliest dismissal scenario is favored, unless you can convince the private schools to change to your calendar. You all need to get on the same page for the sake of the families in the community. We don't really care about the actual dates, so long as the two systems use the same one, which the current system more closely mirrors. Thank you for the initiative to create this survey and request feedback. We LOVE the Albemarle County Schools. You rock! (as my kids say)

Many families schedule August vacations, which an early start date would interfere with. Other local schools, public and private, do not start before August 22nd. Our students would be going to school when some of their friends aren't. Students have summer jobs, often ending just before school begins. With competition for jobs high to begin with, county students would be at a greater disadvantage than someone else applying for the job who can work longer into the summer season.

Spring sports would still be going until the end of May and some into June if they make State playoffs. These kids really wouldn't be able to start summer or summer jobs earlier because they'd still be practicing and travelling for games. On the flip side, fall sports start Aug 1 now, would they start even earlier into the summer if school began in early August?

I love the idea of the second 9 weeks ending prior to the beginning of Winter break. My one question is how this would impact the timing of SOLs. As a teacher and a parent, I would presume that this has the potential to help with the preparation of students for the SOLs; however, if the SOLs are also moved up, this then makes this a relatively moot point. By scheduling the SOLs closer to the end of the year, we are giving everyone more time to prepare and deliver valuable material with little or no down time following the testing period. It has been my experience that once testing is done, much of the teacher/student interaction becomes less effective, both students and teacher "checking out" with nothing new being taught.

No need for a week off in January, as when unexpected days off for weather occur, it is during this time frame. Focus should be on families having more common time together. Draft 3 provides ample time for families to join together during the most common of times as well as providing enough prep time for those taking semester exams.

Our children travel in to mid-August to visit family overseas every year. It's not something we can arrange to happen earlier in the summer. If the schedule starts earlier, they will miss the first week or two weeks of school depending on the draft that is chosen.

Draft 1 is by far our preference for multiple reasons: 1. The second 9 week period ends before winter break. 2. Winter break is longer. This is extremely beneficial for those without family in the area who travel far distances. 3. Works better for the year round swimmer (granted this applies to only a handful of families) 4. Did I mention reasons 1 & 2 :-)

Because of our work schedules, we have a limited amount of family/travel time which happens only in the summer. If school starts on August 8th or August 13th, I will absolutely pull my kids out for family time. My children are honor/A students, and I won't abide by these proposed schedules.

Honestly, Drafts 2 and 3 are equally fine to me. Draft 1 would kill us - three weeks off in the winter?! My husband and I both work and covering just two weeks is a nightmare, not to mention it gets the kids out of their routine...seems like they could lose a lot of learning momentum being out of school for three weeks like that. The only bummer is I would love to have more time out around Thanksgiving. My family lives in Oklahoma and it is a 20 hour drive. Leaving halfway through the day on Wednesday definately won't get us there :(

With the exception of 1/2 day on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, the Draft 2 seems to be the most reasonable. A lot of families travel for Thanksgiving and starting mid-day may present problems for them. Ending the semester before the winter break makes sense since exams will be completed and the new semester can start when the students return.

Teacher workdays immediately following winter break? Last day of school in mid-May? The Aug. 8 start date seems ridiculous and doesn't seem to accomplish the goal of providing consistent educational time. The August 13 start date is a little more reasonable. We prefer the August 22.

Aug 8 is least favorite. As a parent of elementary schooler and preschooler, most preschool schedules run Sept - end of May. Ending at end of May is nice but getting out earlier than that isn't to any advantage.

Due to camps and family vacations Draft 3 would probably allow families the most flexibility with the school year and other extra-curricular activities that they may want to take part in during the summer months. Most sports and scout camps, special interest camps and vacation bible schools occur from late June/early July thru the 2nd week of August. The other two options really seem to take away the summer month of August and additionally I would assume there would be less over-head expense for the school system starting later in August in regards to using the AC and water.

Having an early august start date drastically limits vacation options. It will also make finding day care accomodations/camp options more limited. Starting any earlier than the end if august is just too soon. Please do not implement an early august start.

I do not object to an earlier start but would want the calendar to consider: Will fall sports continue to start with tryouts and practices 2+ weeks before school starts? Prefer later spring break- last week of March or even to remain in April.

why is voting day a holiday? is there a law against holding classes on voting day? The board's desire for a calendar that allows high school students to take semester exams before Winter break shows complete disregard for everyone except the teachers who will be patted on the back for getting the lowest achieving students through their courses by having them take their exams before they can forget the material. A passing grade, obtained only because the student was crammed through the exam before break does NOT mean the student has learned more, but makes the school and teachers look better. Are you forgetting about k-8th grade in your decision making? Your agenda is transparent; it is all about the teachers, school and NOT the students.

I prefer to have the kids out of school later. It's so hot in the month of Aug. Wouldn't it save on the electric bill to be out when it's the hottest so the ac runs less in the schools and on the bus. What happened to starting school after labor day? That was a lot better. Don't try to be like Fluvanna County, you're better than them.

There is no reason these kids need to be getting out of school in May and should go back later in August and continue into June. In all honesty school should not begin until after labor day and run into the 3rd week of June. The kids won't be ready to learn the beginning of August due to summer schedules, vacations and the heat of the month and it is a terrible idea to start school earlier than they do currently. I am not sure why they ever changed it as the schools near Kings Dominion don't go back until after Labor Day.

Virginia tax free weekend always comes the first weekend of August, which it helps me to save some money and get ready for my children. So to me, Draft 1 is not a good idea at all. Some places start after labor day, that is in September. My question is what is the point to start schools way earlier than the labor day?

I am vehemently opposed to an early August start. We are on vacation in August and will not be sending our children to school earlier than August 22.

I would like to know why the school board is trying to start school so much earlier. It does not make any sense to me to start school in the beginning of August, when summer is still in full swing. Nor does it make much sense to have the last day of school in the middle of May. These arrangements would be particularly difficult for working parents as the summer camps do not operate in May. I'm sure the board has reasons for investigating these changes, so it would be helpful to make that information available as a part of this survey. Otherwise my vote on starting school so early in August is a very strong NO!!

I see no purpose in beginning the school year at such an early time and allowing more time for winter break. It would increase the cost of running the schools to air condition them during the hottest month of the year. If the block system is behind such a move, this seems absurd since many parents and personnel are displeased with this system. Please do not make this change!! Our schedule is great as it currently is.

Starting on or around August 1st is completely ludicrous. In the heat of summer, two - three weeks earlier than normal? Really, school a complete month before labor day, this is what its come to? I'd rather send my kids to private school than to start on August 1. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

Calendar number two would appear to coincide well with the SOLs leaving time at the end of the year to complete instruction time and reduce wasted time in the classroom for the students at the end of the year to watch movies.

Should go to after labor day start and lengthen school day at the end by twenty minutes.

Why are we starting school so early in August when it is so hot? The air conditioning bills for the buildings will be horrendously expensive!

Starting school earlier in the year and ending earlier in the spring serves absolutely no purpose. Earlier start makes having a summer job almost impossible, and scheduling family vacations unnecessarily difficult. Starting earlier in August is an unacceptable option for our family.

We preferred the plan that maintained and allowed two weeks over Christmas.

I Enjoy Haveing The Kids Home for the summer my kids work hard all year and Look foward to the time off and being at home. Thank you Sarah Aust

Things I like: early start date, full 2-week Christmas holiday break. Things I dislike: shortened Christmas holiday break, having to end the semester after the break.

I honestly don't like any of the three options over the current calendar system. However, I think Draft 2 (August 13 start) would work better than the other draft options or the current calendar system if you scheduled no school for 21 November (the Wednesday before Thanksgiving) and scheduled no school for the entire week during New Year's. This would still allow you to end school on 23 or 24 May. I hope you consider those changes.

I am a parent of two elementary school children, and a Teacher assistant. I feel that the third option is the best one!!! Thank you for putting out the survey.

Camp options are my biggest concern. I always feel like school is not considering MOST people have both parents working 8-5 M-F and need camp in lieu of school. Camp or other options are an absolute must for parents that work (or we lose our jobs), so please work with local options when making your consideration. Otherwise, I have no issues with any option (unless it is facilitating someone's vacation schedule; you did not provide justification for changes). Chrissi Wood-Smith 434 242 6539

I think that it is a waste of money to include half-days. It is also difficult on parents who work part-time and have their schedule set so that they can be home to meet the bus. Getting out by Memorial Day is not a concern for me, even if the earlier start is being done to get more time in before the SOLs. If Albemarle is going to do a year-round school, then fine if we are in school in part of August, but please don't take away the perfect time for us to spend with family in another part of the country when it is unbearably hot here. Another idea about spring break - if it's not always going to be the first full week in April, why not make it the same as UVA's spring break?

Please consider many children go to camp for a month at a time in the summer. Camp typically ends mid-August. Starting school early August would conflict with sleep-away camp schedules.

Draft 1 is ridiculous.....there is no need for a 2-week break in Dec and Jan. I previously submitted Draft 3 as first choice, and Draft 2 as second.

As a parent of 2 AHS students, I am strongly against the earlier start date to school. My children actively participate in both in and out-of-state summer camps that go well into August, and we feel that this is essential for health and learning. Additionally, I am a single parent, and my children need time with their father according to legal terms; if school started earlier, they would lose most of their camp time, as well as time to be at home and hang out with friends. I would very strongly support a later date, preferable right after Labor Day.

Why change Spring Break? It has been that first week in April for the longest time and many other area schools have the same week and it should stay in April. Also, it seems like there are not the same options for each calendar. Why go to school half-day the Wednesday before Thanksgiving? It is likely that more than half of the students will miss that day anyways. I prefer the later start but would still like some of the options from Draft 1 such as the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off instead of early dismissal. I am okay with not having a day off school before Election Day-that makes sense. I think you need to offer a base schedule and then have people vote on options like spring break and Thanksgiving and winter break.

Prefer shorter Christmas break.

Since implementing the 4x4 schedule, a host of changes have occurred to the detriment of the students. The most serious is the exodus of several highly respected and qualified teachers. The proposed schedule change is another way in which we continue to penalize our children for mistakes the school board and administration have made. It's foolish to think that schedules can make up for the loss of high-quality teaching.

It is difficult to rank without an explanation of why the county wants to change the calendar. A creature of habit, I tend to favor the status quo. Earlier in August can be so unrelentingly hot, and pools and recreation facilities are still open, meaning distraction for learners, at least at first. Plus, days last so long that getting younger children to bed early enough for early-starting school is very hard. If the incentive to start early is to line the end of the first semester up with Winter Break, I can appreciate the logic there. However, if it is to line up SOL testing with the end of second semester/the school year, then I think it would serve more logically to change the timing of SOL testing. Regardless, offer a day off in April.

What is the purpose of starting early / mid-August?

With Draft 1, there is almost a 3 week period at Christmas/New Year of holidays. This can be a burden on working parents.

Starting school on August 8th is much too early! Please reconsider starting on Aug 22nd. Thank you!

Reasons for ranking: 1) Half-days don't seem like a good use of resources. You have to spend just as much on transportation, staffing, etc, but children only receive a few hours of education. Children are less inclined to have the same focus as on regular days. Plus the weird schedule can result in kids wasting away in front of a movie or other worthless time-sink at school. 2) It's great to have 2 full weeks off over winter break. This gives children more time to recharge and decompress, so they return to school excited and refreshed. 3) Many families like to travel over spring break. Travel is more expensive and busy over Easter, so if we can avoid having our spring break over Easter it should help those families.

These are all terrible; I can't even rank them because they're all bad. What is the urgency in ending school in May? Please don't put all those half-days such as Wed. before Thanksgiving, etc. as those days are useless as school days and also useless for family trips. Keep spring break in April. Consider year-round school with some 1-2 week breaks and 6 weeks in summer. (Ignore above rankings as survey won't submit without those filled in. As noted, I don't like any of them)

If you want school to start earlier in the summer, please consider adopting a year-round schedule. Is there a way for a parent to become involved in making the school schedules? Thank you. Laurie Gray 434-989-9502 or laurie.r.gray@gmail.com

1. Why have the August 13 start day end up with an earlier end date (5/17) than the August 8 start day? If we are supposed to be in school August 8, then we should get out earlier. Period. 2. It continues to make absolutely no sense to have a day off the week before Thanksgiving, then have only Thursday and Friday off. 3. Starting school after break on a THURSDAY is asking for families to not show up. Start on a Monday or a Tuesday, not a Thursday. If this is based on getting exams in, or on saving money, then I wonder why there has not been a serious discussion of year-round school. If you did 9 week quarters, then a 2 week break, you'd still have a longer break in the summer. And year-round school is best for learning.

August is a time for family vacations. Please do not take away our time with our children in the summer.

Please do not start school in early or mid August. Midterms have been taken before winter break for many years in the high schools even though the semester ends a couple of weeks into January. Midterms in December have worked well for years. If you change to this schedule there will be complications with CHS and CATEC since CHS is not interested in changing. There will also be problems with Parks and Rec regarding the lakes and pools, summer tourism, fall sports, band camps, etc. There is no need to change to this schedule, and it is likely only being considered because of the 4 X 4 and the desire to give the SOLs for semesterized classes prior to winter break. Please completely abolish semesterized classes in Albemarle County.

Starting after Labor day - students are in school a week or so and then have a day off of school.

In my opinion, even Draft #3 starts too early. Would prefer a start the following week.

Hate the idea of starting that early. We have too many things already planned for August and he would have to miss the summer camp that is a ritual in his life. We also have a family tradition that we have done for 30 years that would be wiped out. We would have to pull him out of school to keep doing it and that while that is not often a good idea it is too important for us to miss.

August 8?!!!! Many of your parents work for UVA. The breaks already do not line up. Let's not go out of our way to really get the two calendars incongruous. The non-22nd dates make no sense to me, and are extremely inconvenient. It is already bad that we start before Labor Day, but to do so by a whole month is ridiculous.

I think the summer break is too long. In England the children are off from school from July 22 until September 6/7. I would like to see ACPS move towards a longer school year. Kids can lose retention over the summer weeks.

I am not sure how they are getting out in the end of May even when they are starting Aug 22nd with draft 3. Right now, they are starting around the same time in August, but not getting out until the first week of June. Where are those days going?

Options 1 stinks, Option 3 is the current even worse option.

I think the idea of starting so early in August doesn't give an adequate summer break. I think the almost 2 weeks off at Christmas is good with the half day before break. Teachers and students need some time to regroup before going full steam ahead.

It seems to be working fine the way it is now. What are your reasons for trying to change the calendar?

The heat of August, the traditional family vacation time in August, and the relatively cooler temperatures of early June are obvious factors making a version of the current calendar greatly preferable to what seems a bizarrely early start date of August 8. For the families involved in the university community, moreover, the disjunction between the school and university calendars would be even greater. As a student who took classes at UVA in my senior year at Western Albemarle, I also am concerned that an August 8 start date would put the school calendar seriously out of sync with UVA's academic calendar. Draft 3 seems to me strongly preferable.

August 8 is too early of a start date and the December break with this start date is too long. August 13 start date is preferable with grading period ending on 12/21 before the December break.

With colleges/universities beginning around Aug 22 it makes sense to keep public school on the same calendar. Suggest alter SOL's and have them be later in May - rather than alter the calendar. Why can't SOL's be the very last week of school?

Move up the March Spring break (maybe in alternating years to late February/early March) so that families who would like to go on a ski/winter vacation may do so.

I can't imagine much learning occurring in August with the heat and during a prime vacation time. It was bad enough this past June and June's monthly temperature average is lower than August's average! Many families plan vacations in August because their children participate in sports camps, enrichment camps, swim team... All of these are experiences that are vital for a child's growth because they provide enriching experiences outside of school. Changing the calendar impacts more than just the students, teachers, and parents. It impacts the community and changes everyone's schedule. Is the entire community ready to do this? I strongly support the later start for better learning and for all that summer has to offer.

Children need to have shorter summers to prevent falling behind in their academics. Shorter summers and longer breaks thru the school year should be considered.

I think we should look at shortening summer break as we lose a month reviewing and evaluating what kids have forgotten in the fall. Create some longer breaks at Spring Break, Winter Break, Thanksgiving Break, Memorial Day and Labor Day. I think the proposed earlier start is a smart move to finish the semester prior to the break.

Starting school that early (Aug. 8) is going to interfere with children's opportunities to participate in all kinds of summer activities (such as camps) that assume a late August school start. Local camps and programs may adjust, but programs further away aren't going to know or care. Also, I'd really like if school just ended right after SOLs, since the teachers stop teaching as soon as the tests are over anyway. It's ridiculous to make the kids sit in the seats (watching Disney and Pixar cartoons, doing field days, etc.) just to say they were in school enough days.

In draft one the December break is too long. Starting back on a Thursday doesn't seem like a good idea either. I could see families skipping school on those last two days of the week. It seems logical to start back on Jan 7. It would make sense for school to end with a 1/2 day the Friday before memorial day and have snow make up days happen after memorial say if needed. Start school on 8/21. Keep calendar similar to number 3, but resume school on Jan. 7. End school for the year on 8/24. I also hope that some of the 1/2 days (10/25, 3/21) are teacher development days. Otherwise I don't understand why they are there.

We particularly like the full two week break the weeks of Christmas and New Year's as that allows for both family and holiday time.

I do not like the long Christmas break, and I am not a big fan of early release days, on which nothing much seems to be accomplished.

I prefer draft 2 b/c they will get out before memorial day and have a lot more summer time. However, an appealing part about draft 3 is that their "spring break" week is actually Easter week. It would be nice if the spring break/easter week on draft 3 could be moved to draft 2. This would be ideal.

I think it is unrealistic to have kids start and end school earlier. What are parents to do with children at the end of the school year when most summer camps don't start until mid June? In addition, if the earlier start is to get kids more prepared for the SOL tests, why don't you target those students that need additional assistance and have them start earlier? Maybe it would be an incentive for those kids to apply themselves during the normal academic year. I don't mind the earlier start, it's the earlier end that is the problem and the extended holidays throughout the year. I don't remember being out of school as much as these kids are now. What is a professional learning day? Isn't that what a free period is for? I remember Sat. school.

I might be in favor of the year starting a bit earlier but not the first option. For many years the children have had to make up days.. this puts them into the June month deeper and deeper. If there could be some assurance that school days being cancelled would be more scrutinized and the kids would be assured of a complete summer or spring vacation then I would be in favor of an earlier start time..

I am not a fan of the short Christmas break in drafts 2 and 3. That is an important rest period, and is often the only chance to see far away family members. I like being able to enjoy late spring out of school, before it gets so hot-- August should be spent in the air conditioning anyway! :)

Students need to be in school for a full day or not at all. Early dismissal is extremely problematic for working parents.

Our family is strongly opposed to starting school early August. It is disruptive to family travel and the predictably hot weather is detrimental to a positive learning environment. Additionally, it will be more expensive to cool the building when they are full of people (as opposed to cooling them when only teachers/staff are present).

I do not like the long, long Winter Break offered in the Aug. 8th start date calendar. Plus the Spring Break week is way early and in March. All 3 have things I like and dislike. I truly believe that the Aug. 13th start date would be the best option.

Why on earth would we start so early and so out of sync with the other schools in the area. Somehow I have to believe that this is good for SOLs. When will the world stop rotating around SOLs and get back to to doing what's best for students!

Draft 1 & 2 are just too early for the kids to start school. The pools are still open at that point and that is a big part of kids enjoying their summer. Also, a lot of people plan their beach trips in August. Draft 3 makes the most sense. With school ending on 5/30 in draft 3, that is memorial day weekend and pools open that weekend. And August 22 is not too early to start. One major thing I noticed about draft 2 is that it starts 5 days after draft 1, but ends 7 days earlier. Seems like it is a shortened school year compared to draft 1. I would say that draft 3 is a better option than the way it is now and better than draft 1 & 2. Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion!

Draft 1 is AWFUL. Draft 3 seems very reasonable and addresses the issues with the least amount of change to the current schedule. I really like the shorter winter break. With that adjustment, the exams after the break will not be such an issue.

Please don't mess with the schedule!!! I prefer it as is (Draft 3). An early date/early dismissal date will only benefit a small percentage (school administration/some teachers?).

I would also like to see an option for year round school excepting the high schools, if necessary.

Starting any earlier than August 22 will negatively impact students and family options for summer activities. These would include vacations, work experiences, camp counselor experiences, trips abroad, mission trips abroad, etc. Also more money would be spent cooling buildings in August rather than in June. I absolutely do not support in any way shape or form starting earlier than Aug. 22.

I'm not really crazy about any of them. They either start too early in the year or leave too short a Xmas break.

I've always believed school should start after Labor Day. Summer jobs and family vacations are difficult with August starts.

I think that August, with the hotter weather, and longer daylight hours, is not optimal for school. Kids will have a hard time getting the necessary rest and there will be higher air conditioning costs. I think the School Board should consider enhanced or early sessions for students who are falling behind and let kids who are already exceeding the norms have a longer time away from school to pursue other interests.

I am not understanding why a change is needed. The first two options seem to keep the kids out of school longer during Christmas breaks and allowing them to get out for summer earlier. I am really not liking the Aug 8th and Aug 13th start dates.

Absolutely hate Draft 1 -- it is not an option!

As a working mom, Draft 1 is very difficult. I already have trouble figuring out 2 weeks of having my child out of school.. going longer would make it much more difficult. I really like #1. Less time off during the year and then I can figure out camps in the Summer.

I think we should keep it the way it is now. Starting school on August 8th or 13th would not make any sense to me at all.

I appreciate the breaks and earlier release of Draft 1 of the calendar. Next, I like the third calendar with a later start and fewer breaks.

I like Aug 13th start because the semester ends before the Dec. holiday. Exams will be over and kids, teachers, and parents can relax a bit over the holiday. Also ending the year at the end of May feels psychologically more pleasing than going into June for one week.

I would like a little more information as to why these options are being considered. I've always thought the third week in August was early to start a school year, but if there are reasons to consider this new format I'm interested in hearing them.

Starting school earlier than the third week of August would result in scheduling difficulties for families who have children in the public schools as well as a child in a private school as the private schools do start until late August or early September.

This proposal is complete and utter insanity. Shift the calendar LATER! After Labor Day, the way it was for many of us growing up. I would prefer my child be in school later in June than earlier in August. You will essentially be dooming many families to a summer without a holiday together. Many of us MUST take vacation after peak season (June - August 15). I have been angry at the August start for years it never occurred that you would make it WORSE for most families. This does nothing but erode the American family even further. While this may seem trivial, it is important for families. It is important for children to have opportunities & memories with their families. PLEASE, DO NOT DO THIS TO US!

The SOL testing at the High School level needs to be completed before Christmas break, too much information is lost during that time. It appears that Draft 1 & 2 can accomplish that task.

Half days are difficult on two-working parent families. I don't think starting school in the heat of August is a good idea. Better to wait until it has started to cool down a bit later in the month.

The early start date is unacceptable in Virginia due to the tourism income to our area! My children have summer jobs that revolve around the summer schedule and much of their income comes from the month of August when families are on vacation visiting the Charlottesville area.

I have a child in the city school system and would appreciate it if the county and city continued to have the same start/end dates as well as winter and spring breaks.

IMHO the first two are deplorable. I tried to ONLY rank #3 but the form won't submit that way. This was a bad idea when the form was set up. Drafts 1 & 2 are unacceptable - period. August is the summer. As long as we're on this old-fashioned, agricultural-based logic for the school year (as opposed to, say, a quarter system) it is completely wrong to steal the end of the summer from the kids. Do not send my kids back to school in the beginning or even middle of August. I do want them out of school as of the beginning of June though. So Draft 3 just looks to me like it goes back to about where things were several years ago before we started robbing the kids of the first half of June. So I'd be happy to be back on it.

I think it is absolutely ridiculous that the county is making so many changes to these children's schedules. Isn't it bad enough that the semesters have been changed last year screwing with the rising seniors and now you want to make changes to the grading system as well as the start date? Enough is enough.

lot of parents are on vacation and the kids who show in county fairs will be showing the beginning of August

I think that Draft 3 is by far the best choice. I will be extremely disappointed if either of the other 2 choices become the school calendar.

We like some elements from each of the 3 drafts. We really like the idea of completing exams for period 2 prior to Christmas as in draft 1 and 2. We don't like starting so early (August 8) as in draft 1, nor do we like the very extended Christmas break in draft 1. However, May 17th does seem very early to get out, as in draft 2. Would it be possible to have a hybrid between drafts 1 and 2? By pushing the professional learning days to after Christmas, couldn't you start on 8/13, finish exams before Christmas and get out sometime during the week of May 20th? That seems to be the most sensible plan.

My only concern about an earlier start of the school year is the weather, August is still a very warm month, and it will require a lot of use of the air conditioning system in schools to keep teachers and students cool and concentrated.

The August 8 date is absolutely horrible. August 13 as a start date is hardly much better. Many camps and enrichment opportunities for children go through August 10-15'ish. Starting on August 8 would deprive many children of such opportunities. If teachers did not have to spend class time reviewing students specifically for the SOL, schools would have plenty of instructional days were they to start the day after Labor Day and end around Memorial Day.

Would really like a full day off the Wednesday of Thanksgiving week.

August 8 is too early! August 13 is too early as well! Would hurt some older students in terms of summer job commitments.

The long winter break would be difficult because of parent working schedules. Summer sports (baseball, softball all-star sports, etc.) extend well into July. If school starts too early in August, there is no time left for family vacations. I have a younger child in private school because of certain needs. That school has a more traditional schedule of starting closer to Labor Day. If the older child starts so early, it is difficult because there are several weeks during which the older child will be unavailable to baby sit.

Starting in early August interferes with nearly everyone's vacation and family time plans. It is intrusive and unnecessary. It also will tend to demotivate students by moving them toward a year-round school year.

Children need some relaxation time so please keep winter break at 2 weeks. I like the 1/2 day on Friday and then two weeks off for winter break. I believe the option with this is my least favorite, but I would think this could be incorporated into the other schedules. Seems we need a 4th option a hybrid of the other 3. August 8th is just too early to start the school year! Heck it will be too hot to go outside and use the playground equipment for a couple weeks more than usual Not sure what the rationale for the change is. Can this be better explained to the public? What is wrong with the schedule we had? What is the justification for starting earlier? As a parent I have no idea what prompted this discussion and change. Thanks

Starting school on Aug. 8 presents several issues with our family. We have two children in two schools within this county and presents a difficult situation for my high school age son in particular. The early schedule interferes with his ability to attend camp and it interferes with our typical vacation schedule. Also most summer care/camps for my daughter don't typically begin until late May or June.

I like the long Christmas break with draft #1. I think there will be less overlap or conflict with Fall and Winter sports with this schedule

Too many activities planned during August. Do not start earlier.

I don't understand why people want to start school so much earlier. The weather is so hot in Aug, I'm sure the schools will spend a ton of money on air conditioning if school starts in early Aug. I think May 17th is WAY too early to end. The weather's not hot enough for beach-type vacations then, and other schools across the country don't end that early (for planning vacation visits.) Also, places in town that put on summer camps for kids may have conflicts and won't be able to start that early. For Christmas vacation I prefer 1 1/2 - 2 weeks, the draft #1 plan seems too long at almost 3 weeks off. I MUCH prefer draft #3, if Easter is March 31 that year I like having spring break include Easter.

Would prefer a later first day of school. Don't feel the kids need two full weeks for winter break.

DRAFT 1. Starting on August 8, depriving kids of the activities of Summer, then burning educational time to combat childhood obesity? I realize this represents a complete prostration to the Standards of Learning. Christmas Break ("Professional Learning Days" + "Holidays") from December 21 through January 8? The worst thought-out proposal I could imagine. DRAFT 2. August 13 to a half-day on MAY 17??? If ACPS is going to deliver the same SOL-based education as Buckingham and Louisa counties, our property taxes should be reduced accordingly. DRAFT 3. If these school calendars are designed to accommodate fiscal challenges, perhaps a reduction in Professional Learning Days could be considered.

Why is spring break being changed from the first full week of April? Getting rid of August as part of summer vacation is simply ridiculous. There are numerous school activities, such as sports and band, that already require the children to meet regularly during August (at least). Not to mention the need for family vacations, summer jobs, and a break from school!

I prefer we start after Labor day as so many school systems do and ours used to. We should be out of school in the summer and not Spring. This also effects parent's abilities to find camps.

I only want the Aug 22 start date. Do not include my forced (by the survey) second choice.

Whichever calendar is picked, please consider having a full two week Winter Break. Thank you!

We are 2 working parents who rely on the use of camps, many of which are staffed by college students, as a summer option for our children. These camps may no longer be an option for us in early May as students will not be finished college & have had time to be trained. Draft 1 has too long of a winter break. While camp type options may be available during winter break, it is difficult to integrate the children in these types of programs for a week or so and generally not much is gained for the child or the parent. Drafts 1 & 2 have too short a time between the winter break & the spring break (9.5 wks & 10 wks) versus 11.5 weeks (draft 3). With a long break at the holiday, it will be difficult to take leave again in such a short time span.

The 1st 2 drafts are terrible options. Please stick with what works and stay with something similar to what we have done in the past. Option 3 with start date of Aug 22 is BEST for students, and teachers.

I am not in favor of half days. It puts a tremendous strain on single parent households I would lose a days work if schools dismissed at 11:00.

Draft 1 - No need for 2 weeks over winter break - most parent(s) can't take all that time off work. Weather usually isn't great for playing outside. Too early of a start - hot weather = higher cooling bills (I hope you keep the AC at warmer level when school is out). Only reason to choose Draft 3 over Draft 2 is the later start date with utility bill issue and the more "traditional" calendar of Labor Day to Memorial Day. Would be nice if School Board mentioned why this change is under consideration. Heard 2 rumors - 1) bumping up against college deadlines 2) Teacher's union members do not want to have to work over winter break. Clearing the air to the public might help make selling the idea easier.

I do not support Draft 1 and I hope it will not be approved. I prefer a longer summer vacation than 3 weeks in the winter.

We would be in favor of beginning school after Labor Day and ending the first week in June and maybe taking out some of the days off in October, January and February. Quantity of time in school does not necessarily mean quality and burned out students are not necessarily going to be more productive students.

aug 8 ends 5/24 but aug 13 ends 5/17. i didn't figure out why the earlier start ends later than the later start yet. thank you.

Most vacations are taken in June and July and to have the kids out of school for an entire month (August) makes no sense. The earlier they start then the earlier they will get back in. Year-Round would also be good. Especially, as our teens are growing up such as mine whom is a 10th grader and plays football, but after that there is nothing for him to do as I work and he doesn't drive. Think about the middle age from 9-10 graders as it seems they are being left

It is annoying that you schedule a Spring break in March when the major travel weekend is in April over Easter causing my son to lose school days because he will be out of state with family.

I would prefer that Spring break would be the first week of April. August is vacation time for our family; an early start would not be favorable.

I have already made arrangements for the kids to have visitations with their father this summer, and such a sudden change of start date would make things really difficult and could create real problem. I think this is something that need to be considered farther in advance than this. People have already made their summer plans. Thank you. There are a lot of half days - these are difficult for working parents. I am finally out of my leave rut, but have spent years with little leave and remember how hard it can be to handle half days.

I dislike the idea of starting the school year so early. I think it will be very difficult for students to adjust going back to school so early in the summer. I believe many students will have difficulty focusing on their studies and doing homework when the weather is still warm and days are still long. This will disrupt pool schedule (kids who compete in swimming), students who work and many families who plan vacations in August. I believe many students will miss the first week of school due to the fact so many families plan vacations the 2nd and 3rd week of August. Ifh this is the case then starting classes early will put many students behind forcing them and teachers to play "catch-up" the following week. An unfair scenario for both.

I really dislike in draft 1 the long Christmas break for several reasons. I think when the students are out of class for so long, they get out of the swing of school and it is hard to get them back into the routine. Also, for working parents it is hard to take vacation time for such a long period of time so we have to find child care which is very expensive!! Isn't it going to cost a lot to run AC in August? I like draft 3 because I think the kids should be on Summer break in August - less AC in schools and it is a great time to vacation. Work and projects should not be assigned over the breaks. I think you could get in some extra days by reducing the Christmas break. They don't need that much time off!

It would be nice to have a "transitional" year - Draft 2, prior to going to the Draft 1. Otherwise their summer is VERY short, especially our kids that are in marching band or sports. Their summer actually ends 2 weeks prior to the first day of school thanks

I don't think that there is enough notice to change the date this much. Some family like mine always goes on vacation in August and draft 1 and 2 would have my two kids out of school for a week right at the beginning of the school year. And this is not right. I do not feel that things should be changed. Changing the start day will be changing the kids being on a bus for a hour or more in some cases in weather that could be as high as 100 or more and that is too hot for kids to be stuck on a bus.

We have, for years, taken our vacation in August. The Aug. 8th start date is ridiculously early and will negate any vacation time for our family. Either our kids will not be able to attend school on the first day (which is totally unacceptable and a hardship on the kids) or our family will not be able to take a summer vacation (also totally unacceptable!) Please do not make school start on such an absurdly early date!

Like the Aug 8th start date but the Christmas/New Years time off is much too long- nearly 3 weeks. The half day options in the Aug 13 start date calendar is great- often underused in Albemarle Cty

Starting school in early or middle August should be a crime!

The first draft really provides nearly 3 weeks off for winter break. This is a time when camps are not available to families and I feel it puts an undue burden for working families who cannot take extended winter vacations. In addition in this schedule the end date is LATER than in draft 2 which has an earlier start date. This seems counter productive. The 2nd and 3rd drafts are more compact but ending too early in May as in draft 2 also is difficult for working families as camps don't start until June. The 3rd draft seems to be compact, have less extended breaks in the school year and still ends reasonably early. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. Thedra Nichols, kids in Henley and Brownsville.

I question why you would need to start school so early in draft 1. If the point is to come closer to "year-round" school, then why is there still a 2 month block of free time in the summer? All that time is wasted and could be used for learning. I would definitely favor a calendar where school started in early August and ended at the end of June, with frequent one week breaks over the course of the year.

All are unacceptable. School should start after Labor Day. Moreover, Easter week should be off. Given that over 90% of the county is Judeo Christian to not have some accommodation for Easter is a real secularist slap in the face of our culture and history. You should be ashamed of yourselves. THE LATER THE START OF SCHOOL THE BETTER - AFTER LABOR DAY. ARE YOU AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OR A DAY CARE?

I did not really like any due the to differing Winter Breaks. 13 days off (draft 1) is way too long but the other drafts were too short. 2 weeks works well as can be for working parents. I do not agree with half days at all. My preference would probably be to start 8/13 with a simple 2 weeks off during the Winter.

I would prefer the same schedule as 2010/2011 -- with two weeks of winter break and dismissing in early June. What are the implications for an August 8 start on high school sports pre-season practices. Would those start even earlier in the summer? What is the reason to stop at the end of May for each of the drafts?

I am a parent and an employee. I would like to try something new this year and start in early August. I love the long Winter Break with plenty of Professional Development Days worked in. That is only possible if exams are completed before break! Once people get used to the idea, they might wonder why it has taken us so long to make a change! As an employee, I like the Professional Learning Days and additional holidays interspersed through the year. Finally, we get an actual holiday on Election Day and Presidents Day! Hooray! Thank you for having the creativity and initiative to try something new!

I like the later start and slightly shorter winter break. Draft 3 just makes more sense to me.

I will never understand why it is that the school board wants to make the school year longer, when so many families are struggling to pay for day care. Instead of making the school year longer why not make the school day longer. This would allow the teachers to do more then just cram information into the students heads, so they can pass the SOL. The extra time each can allow those students who are behind time for extra help, those that participate in sports can attend practice, students who are doing well can participate in clubs or hands on activities to help then retain information longer. The students don't have the time to really learn anything due to the necessity to cram information into the students solely to pass a test.

I prefer to stay with the Aug 22 date - I have children at other schools who start later than Aug 22

these kids hardly get a summer now compared to other counties you keep them until the middle of June and start them back middle of August. Give them a break

The kids should have more time to play outside while it is warm before fall and the cold winter.

Thanks for soliciting input; however, it would also be great to see the exam schedule in this mix of dates!

August 8 is too early to start - too hot! Two weeks off at Christmas time is too long. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback!

Please make sure that graduation for options 1 and 2 do not conflict with UVa's graduation. Option 2 is better than Option 3, in my opinion, because it ends the first semester before winter break... giving the kids and teachers more of a break between semesters.

it would be nice to sync the calendar with other public schools in the area

Personally i DON'T like any of the 3 options!! Our children are sent to school to LEARN not to be out of school for a week at a time every few months. I am still VERY in favor of a all year around school calander and until that option is available I'll just "go with the flow" of which ever school calander is decided on. I truly do NOT think the schools think about when students are out for long durations how much of a burden it is on parents (especially single ones like myself) to have to find and pay for child care. The schools DON'T provide affordable programs that allow parents to send their children to durning these times off. Our schools need to focus more on EDUCATION & less onfulfilling the least number of days students must attend!

I would like to get out of school on or before Memorial Day and to keep the Christmas break under 2 weeks.

I like the idea of not having as much time off around Christmas. August 8 seems a litte early to me...

How about a draft where they start in September and go into early June?

I think if school started on August 8, there would be a lot of children that would miss the first week of school.

I think if we could start a few days earlier on draft #3 and add a few days to the Christmas break then #3 would be perfect. Likewise, if we started a week later than draft #1 and ended a week later than draft #1 that would be perfect as well.

Draft 3 is the least favorable because of the Memorial day break then students return for 3 days, more than likely most students will not return making attendance poor

Draft 2 with the following modifications: 1/7/13 resume classes as the start of second semester; 4/1-4/5 spring break holiday; 5/21 last day of school First semester is completed before winter break (provided there are no days missed) Provides a two week break between semesters Keeps spring break as the first week in April

I would prefer to go an extra day at the end of the year and give a full day off the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

It would be helpful to hear the boards rationale for each of these start dates. Through the years the start date has moved earlier into August and I have yet to hear a convincing reason why this is necessary

Starting children early in August is simply the wrong thing to do. It's too hot to work, usually too hot to have them go outside for recess during the day. What do you do with them during 100 degree afternoons? You can't let them out due to health concerns. Their mindset will be that it's still summer -- because it is. Therefore, you will have a wasted month of school until they settle down. While many school systems start after Labor Day, your proposal to go earlier seems dangerous and tone-deaf to what parents are telling you they need. More important, it's detrimental to our children's academic careers. Bad call, Albemarle County!

My son attends a sleep-away camp in Maine - a valuable experience for him as he begins to spread his wings. Both calendar drafts 1 and 2 would prevent him from attending this camp as it does not end until the middle of August. August 8 is simply too early to begin school - save some money on air-condition bills and begin later.

I don;t understand why we are starting early. We were told the reason for starting before labor day was to add in snow days so the children would not have an extended end of the year, but in the past they have still been penalized for missing snow days and had to stay longer.. This really interferes with Vacations families plan and the much needed rest these children need.

This would be great if they actually get out in May and not made to stay thru june because of missed time.

How does the earlier start dates affect the spring sports schedules with other schools that start later?

The 8/8 start date gives a decent break at Christmas. It also gets us out of school by Memorial day - and the kids are not doing anything after that anyway. Many of the younger (elementary) kids leave to go on vacations with their families around Memorial day. The secondary kids have exams. Just be done! Spring fever is not something that teachers want to deal with! For kids that play sports it will also give them time to get acclimated into their school year before they start competition.

I was unable to see the drafts; therefore, I was not able to understand the rationale behind starting the school year earlier.

Childcare during the two week holiday offered on Draft 1 would be a problem. I hope that the schools would offer some kind of program that parents could register thier students for at a reasonable fee.

Summer is important. We spend the first two weeks in August with family every year. I strongly opposed starting the school year earlier.

Yikes! This is a huge change in a number of ways. But I'm honestly more concerned with the resurrected Charlottesville bypass, and it's proximity to a number of local schools. I sincerely hope that the school board is adamantly opposed to subjecting our children to the pollution the proposed solution would entail. I'm far less concerned about the school calendar than placing a highway right next to their playground. Thanks for giving us the opportunity to provide feedback!

This is the start of year round schooling. Don't do it. If the system worked properly this would not have to be done.

I like Draft 2 because it puts the school inline with some of the other counties and I think it would be more cost efficient as well. It will also give the kids a longer break as well as giving parents more flexibility in vacation scheduling. I think this would be good for our kids. I know a county that does this and the kids love it.

With fall sports beginning in early August, the students might as well be in class since we as a family cannot travel at that time.

Draft 2 is a good option except for the high number of early dismissal days. Those days are good for no one--the students do not get enough instruction to make school worthwhile, the teachers do not get enough time for professional development, and most working parents end up having to take the whole day off anyway. Draft 1 has no early dismissal days, but the teacher workdays tacked on to vacation weeks are a problem as they extend the need for childcare at already stretched times. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

We have access to a beach house in NJ for the summer. The ocean is fairly cold until late June and the season runs through Labor Day. Starting school on the 8th severely limits our time at the beach and with our son's grandparents. ACAC camp and Hollymead pool are also pretty cool until about late June.

Personally, I'd prefer a later start date either the last week of August or after Labor Day.

actually, my ranking is not really true. i don't like the draft 1-aug. 8 start. that is too early. however, i like the longer winter vacation in that draft. i'd suggest a 4th draft with a mid august start and finish of the school year in the beginning of june plus a longer winter vacation as in draft 1

I would not like to see the school year begin in ealy August. That is a traditional time off for the kids and the families and getting out in Mid-May is too early for the kids to get out of school. I really prefer the current schedule of starting towards the end of August and getting out at the beginning of June.

Many kids attend summer camps, work during the summer to help pay for college... starting early August causes problems with that.

I don't think we should start school earlier. There is enough stress and pressure on children and teachers and to prolong it is just torture. I'm not sure why this is being considered. Extending time does not necessarily provide better grades or more prepare students, just burnt out ones who are tired of constant school. How about quality instruction. Not to mention that as a family, we like the extended time to take vacation or long weekends and shorter start time does not allow for 2 working parents to have enough time to get all that in before August.

Hi, I am a parent I think it is an excellent idea to start school earlier, then usual. Thank you for letting way in on this decision.

Draft 1 is a very difficult schedule for working parents. Drafts 2 and 3 are MUCH more workable.

The earlier start puts the kids in school at the hottest time of the summer which would be very tough for the PE, recess, etc. Not to mention the increased power consumption for proper A/C.

Really do not like the huge winter break.

For planning purposes we need to choose a start week (i.e. 3rd week of August) and stick with it year after year, just like we have in past years for spring break (first full week of April). As a single parent of 3, it is important that I can count on the schedule to be consistent so I can plan ahead.

A change to 8/13 or 8/8 is of sufficient magnitude that if a decision is made in favor of one of these dates, there should be much more than a lead time of what will be under one year. The ACPS should learn from other recent difficulties in communicating with the public, take time to explain the case for that decision, and let the consequences of the news settle in. Many families plan their lives much further out than this allows. Academic year beginning 2013 or 2014 is the earliest such a change should be implemented. From time of decision to time of implementation should be well over one year. Do not rush.

Please do not take away summer. There is no good reason to do this. There are no strong data that suggest coming back in August is beneficial to students, and you are seriously interfering with a time that, to many families, is sacred. All for what purpose? No good one, as far as I can tell. So leave summer alone. Thank you.

I am a firm believer that the kids should start school after Labor Day and get out before Memorial Day. There is too much pressure these days with the amount of work on the kids. They need a bigger break for rest and family time.

So supportive of school ending in May and not June! Thank you for looking at this---This is the most important in terms of overnight summer camp, etc that always begin in early June and in the past we have had to make other arrangements. Option 2 allows for more than enough make-up days in May which is really smart!

If the calendar needs to shift to an earlier start date, I would prefer not to change so drastically in one year. I would roll back one week this year, then another week next year.

August 8th is way too early . . . the 2nd option has quite a discrepancy in days per quarter. . . the 3rd option seems to be the best compromise.

Please take into consideration summer camps. Summer camps do not begin until June and tend to go until 2nd or 3rd week of August.

what did you do with the kids out of school for that long in the winter time (draft2)?

I'm not sure how any of this impacts the athletic schedules for spring sports. Considering we don't play anyone in our area. There is only so early you can start given our weather. Field space is already tight at Albemarle it could be a scheduling nightmare.

sorry, wrong rank before. Don't like whichever has the longest winter break.

I don't think we should change the school calendar year. Spring starts after March 20th and makes no sense to take it "Spring Break" before Spring and I don't agree with getting out before and starting earlier besides what's the purpose??? Then it messes Summer Vacations parents are the ones that would have to coordinate their schedules to accommodate the school and as it is we have to provide more then we should with school supplies because the government keeps taking money away from schools. I don't agree with this coming up change!

I think it is crazy to start the school year so early. You are putting the needs of your staff before the needs of thousands of families in the county.

I like the long winter break in Draft 1 because it gives students a chance to rest between semesters. I also think quarters should be as close in length as possible so teachers can present content at the same rate no matter when the material is taught.

I like the time that school starts now which compares to Draft 3. I think kids are getting their summer time cut by starting earlier and it may be harder go them enthusiastic about starting school at an earlier date.

I think all proposed calendars are terrible. What is the benefit of starting school so early? What impact will this have on Fall sports athletes? Why are there an inconsistent number of holiday's, Professional Learning Days, and New Teacher Orientation days? The logic/rationale behind these differences is unclear and should be explained.

I have no problem with the current school schedule. Our family usually takes a trip in August. So, the later in August school starts, the better for us. I think kids need a long break from school. A full three months would be good. They only get about 2 1/2 months as it is now. I am not in favor of starting school in early or mid August. Late August is best.

Absolutely start date of Aug 8 is too early. Do not feel like we need so many days off during school year that Albemarle County gives.

How can students have jobs at camps or tourist destinations with such early start dates? Who cares if the semester ends after Xmas break? It always has before and it has never been a problem. You are ruining the students' chances for an unencumbered summer with enrichment opportunities if you start earlier. August is FAMILY TIME! Even starting before Labor Day is crummy, but can't be avoided b/c of the ridiculous number of days in school required by the state. I swear you are driving the families who are educated and care out of the public schools and then where will you be?

Late the school starts the better please.

Calendar 1 suggestions: July - New teacher: Jul 30- Aug 3 - need as much mentoring /info as possible Aug - Tchr workdays: Aug. 6-10 - tchrs need more prep time before school starts, esp with many meetings/ inservices thrown in. First day of school: Aug. 13 Sept. – Nov - good Dec/Jan - no need for Dec 21 off; workday on 8th to prepare for next semester. Feb – good Mar. – prefer spring break last week of March, but smart to have after grading period ends. Tchr workday: right AFTER spring break, not before it. April / May - good for SOLs and AP exams. Workday at end a must for exam grading, clean up, and sign out duties

On Draft 3...if the school extends due to snow days, why is it skipping May 31 as a make up day? I also think coordinating spring break with Easter is great.

I like the longer Christmas break...it allows for rest and travel and family time.

In many families, both parents work. The Draft 1 calendar includes so many days during winter break that it would create difficulties finding child care for working parents. I already take off work for over a week during that time. The other issue is that some families cannot take vacation until August, so returning as early as Aug. 8th is problematic.

No reasons were stated as to WHY we need to change the calendar?

August 8th is far too early to begin school. I don't understand why getting out in June is not ok. A winter break any longer than necessary is too long with younger kids running around the house with nothing to do at the holidays. Two and a half weeks off is far too long.

August 8 start date is too early for families whose children are involved in summer sports activities and plan their vacations accordingly.

I feel strongly against an early August start date. Children who participate in summer sports, such a swim team, look forward to a couple of weeks of down time in August before school begins.

Foreign exchange students tend to arrive in Mid Aug.....school would already be in session. The deadline to get students approved for attendance in the exchange program would probably be moved up making it very difficult to secure families. The present July 1 final date is already challenging.

I firmly believe that draft #1 with a Christmas break of 13 days (19 days including weekends) would be a hardship for some families because they would have to find child care for their children at a time when money is probably tight anyway due to gift purchasing, etc. I like draft #3 because the amount of time off for Christmas is a good break, but not too much time & it still allows the children to be out of school earlier assuming no inclement weather days. I also like Spring Break in March because it gives more time for SOL preparation & the earlier last day of school lessens the amount of time when kids do next to nothing in school after SOLs are completed. Kids don't need to be in school once SOLs are over, they learn nothing.

My first choice is the draft 2 calendar. With the draft 1 August 8th is just too early and having close to three weeks off at Christmas going well into January is excessive. Also, draft 3 would not rectify the current problem of finishing the first nine weeks prior to Christmas break and going to school for 2-1/2 days after Memorial Day is a total waste of everyone's time. Also, spring break being on the week before Easter on the draft 3 calendar can potentially cause problems for families scheduling travel. This may lead to a decrease in approval for that choice after the fact.

The first semester should end and exams given prior to winter break. If we are preparing our children for college, it should prepare them for the realities of the university world.

Draft 3 is definitely the best for working parents (most of us) with draft 1 being a true "hot mess", way too many days off and teacher planning days during the week, I'm looking at my "vacation days" turning into "daycare days" before my eyes. Draft 3 seems like a great compromise and minimizes the impact to working parents who'd still like to take a couple of actual vacation days every year :-). Thanks for asking.

When looking at an August 8th start date, there are Scout camps & sports events that last almost up to that time--so there would be a trickle down effect to other activities/venues. For those of us working in jobs where there are a large number of people trying to take vacations during the summer break & a limited number of people that can be off at the same time--that early start date is restricting the number of weeks available for vacations--again trickle down. And, in studying the calendars there isn't much gain at the end of the year, unless no make-up days are used.

Honestly, I don't like ANY of them. I would prefer school start AFTER Labor Day and Spring break be eliminated all together. Why take a break right before SOLs begin?

Any very significant change to the Alb Cty school calendar, as proposed in Draft 1, would be a disservice to many working parents & their families. Child care & camp offerings are much more limited in the early summer months, synchronicity with other area schools' schedules may be lost and vacation planning, athletic scheduling would pose a much greater challenge for administrators, teachers and families. Our family has four children in area schools: two at CHS, for whom we pay out-of-district fees, one at Henley MS, and one at WAHS.

I'm all in favor of starting the school year earlier and avoiding the wasted classroom time that results at the end of the school year at the high school level. I am NOT in favor of the multiple early dismissal days in Draft 2 and 3. As a working parent it is too hard to come up with childcare options for our younger child, and I cannot use vacation/sick days for this.

August 22 is still too early to start. Summer vacation should run from Memorial Day through Labor Day. There are so many wasted days during the school year for play days, movie days, reading days, etc. Too much filler. Why not stick to actual teaching days and get through the material more quickly? Children need reliable time off for family time, camp, work, etc. August should be reclaimed as a vacation month. Family time is very important to children! Stop taking it away from us!

due to there might be some snow storm in the December calendar month last year, so it is better start early to make time for those late days of school cancels.

Our summer is already planned. This is too late to make such radical changes.

It would have been helpful for you to have told us that the 'strategy' is behind each of the three offerings. Are you simply just making up different/earlier start date or do you have a reason for suggesting that. I wish you'd fill people in before you ask for opinions.

Much prefer Draft 3 - Take professional learning day from March and move to April! There needs to be a day off for students sometime in April/May - it's too long of a stretch.

It would be terrible for children to spend the month of August in school. It is hot. That is a month when a lot of families go on vacation. There is no reason to get out of school in May. It is too cool for kids to play in the pool. Swim teams would have to start earlier.

My family would not be able to take a family vacation with draft 1 and 2. I don't understand why we are looking at changing the current system?? Was something wrong with it because it has always worked for us.

August 8th is ridiculously early to start the school year, especially since the end date is not significantly different than that offered in the other two options. I hope that starting the school year earlier adds to the actual instructional time provided to students. As things stand now, the time period between the end of SOLs and the end of the school year -- at least in the elementary and middle schools -- is glorified babysitting, with minimal time spent on solid academics and most of the time spent on fluff, like watching movies and trips to local pools, that the students do not matter.

Middle of the road choice, don't lose too much summer, plenty of and well placed vacation time. Choice one starts too early and choice two starts too late!

I think early dismissal days should be eliminated from the school calendar. Very little learning occurs on these days and I consider them a waste of time for everyone. I would have liked to have seen a calendar with school starting on 8-13, a two week Christmas break and no early dismissal days. A calendar with these attributes would be my first choice. I feel that 8-8 is just too soon to start school.

Why is it that we never consider a calendar starting after labor day? For parents that are also teachers the early start means we have to take time off to move our kids into college. Not to mention our schedule is so different from other areas it makes it hard to schedule vacations without paying peak season prices. It seems like everything about Albemarle County ends up costing us more money every time we turn around. How about thinking about the parents and teachers for a change and not central office. Why take a week the two weeks at Christmas. We do not even get to take time at Easter because our break is always the first week of April. Can't we at least have time at Christmas to go see family?

August is a HOT month and a big vacation month for work and families. To have kids miss 3 weeks of summer in August so they can get out of school in the middle of May when its barely warm enough for swimming and over a month away from the start of summer is not good. I think school should start after labor day but if that's not an option (and I don't know why its not) the Aug 22nd start is the only choice. The calendar options also took away a two week break over Christmas unless we start in early Aug which is not right. We were able to start late August this past year, receive a two week break for Christmas and still get out in early June. Why does the school board feel the need to redefine when the summer begins and ends?

Please do not take summer away from my children! Summer is a time of freedom for them. Starting in Aug, when the weather is warm and people want to be at the beach will encourage poor attendance because families are still taking vacations!! Do not start early!!

Starting in early Aug is not a good idea! The kids will still have their minds on summer activities. Families may still be taking vacations. Please do not start school any earlier than we already start!!

August 8th is too early to start and also moves the spring break up to mid March. Weather can still be pretty bad in mid march for an enjoyable spring break.

Please provide the final calendar in iCal format so that the calendar can subscribed to and changes will automatically be reflected. See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/iCalendar>

Many children in this area (3,000) swim in the summer through the JSL league through Aug 1 and parents plan vacations in August. The earlier starts would be also be difficult on the athletic seasons. Finally, if you are going to move spring break so early, why not attempt to finally align with UVA, but please don't change this drastically!!

I would like to see the first day of school pushed past Labor Day. It's disruptive to have a school calendar out-of-whack so many other school systems. It makes it difficult to plan vacations and visit relatives.

I would like to see these choices presented with some background and rationale that answer some of the anticipated questions. Otherwise, we are answering these in a vacuum. I really don't like any of these as they are right now. As the parent of a high school athlete, I wonder about ending the school year so early in May when state championships for several sports are in June. I don't like the Jan 7 & 8 in-service days on draft 1, thinking that break is very long for working parents with younger children. Draft 2 would be my preference if the issue of sports regionals and championships could be addressed with the very early dismissal date.

When I was a kid, I thought summers were too short (especially at the end). I still do! It's hard to get older students off to college at the same time the younger ones are starting school. Why can't we wait 'til after Labor Day? That makes more sense than having a long weekend before you've really gotten started. And I would rather end the school year earlier too. My daughter's camp started June 12 -- that was the only session available for her. I was afraid she might have to miss the beginning of camp or the last day of school; neither would have been satisfactory. I'm sorry this comment is not more helpful..... I guess the 180 day requirement won't change.

I don't think it is necessary to have early dismissal days. Seems like a waste of MONEY!! Why is Spring Break moved? It is usually the first week of April every year?

I think it is going to take a while for parents in this area to get used to starting school so early and having vacations rearranged. Whatever becomes the final calendar will need to continue for at least 6 years. Good luck

I am strongly against starting school early in August for reasons too numerous to list here. One primary concern is a negative effect on kids' summer jobs. For example, one of my children is a counselor at a camp in N.C. Either of the two early start dates (Aug. 8 or Aug 13) would make this type of employment an impossibility, as most camps do not end until at least the middle of August. How many students who want and NEED summer jobs would be negatively impacted by starting school in early/mid August?

While I prefer Draft 2, I believe that the last day of school is too early. It should be May 24 with the following week as make-up days if needed. Then, there could be a full two weeks of a Christmas Holiday to New Year's Day from December 24 through January 4 and any of these days may also be used as teacher only days. The second advantage is that the start date can be moved to that Wednesday, August 15, a full week later than the Draft 1. These extra five days at the end of May will cover the August 15 delay start and the extra winter holiday.

I like that all of these options release school in the month of May, but I also like the longer Christmas holiday break associated with the first option (for those of who travel at that time, it helps).

please consider most parents both have to work now. camps etc will need to be notified of any changes since many of us depend on that. in addition pools in this area are FREEZING In may.

The first draft is definitely the my favorite because it works better with real-life work/family schedules. Summer tends to be hardest on families where both parents work however, there are two things I would like to address with Draft 1. First, I don't like the length of the Christmas/winter holiday. Children need to return on the 4th or 7th so, I would recommend moving the professional work days. Second, with all the schedules presented, it would be great if spring break were later because March weather is so unpredictable and usually cold. An April spring break would be ideal because of the weather and it is generally easier to get-away closer to Easter. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback!

Please do not encroach on the kid's summer any more than you already have. Moving the start date earlier in the month will only mess up all family plans and most likely you'll have a percentage of kids who are not in school on starting day, mine won't be. A lot of us have family who do not live anywhere nearby (10 - 13 hour drive by car), and the summer is the one time of year that we get to travel and visit family. Drafts 1 is ridiculous, and Draft 2 is still an imposition. Quit messing with the schedule and keep it as is.

This really falls in line with college schedules well so families with some children that age would like it.

I think a 12 month school year is better for the students and parents

we moved here from an early August school calendar district so have had experience and really love it. thanks for asking for everyone's input

Why are you considering this? What exactly is the educational rationale for starting earlier? There are absolutely no reasons that you have given for such a change. I see no educational benefit and I see this as an anti-family initiative. You will needlessly cut short the summertime for thousands of kids next year, thereby taking away important family time. The summertime is also an important time for kids social and spiritual growth. I am strongly opposed.

Ending the school year too early can make it difficult for families to find summer care for their children. Shorter breaks throughout the year and a later start make more sense.

August 8 is simply too early to start, and it interferes too much with summer events and family vacation schedules. Ending before Memorial Day is very good, which works well with the August 13 start option.

I think the Aug 8 start date is too early, but having the semester end before Christmas break is a benefit that I think is worth being a little earlier - thus my choice of Aug 13th start as the best calendar.

Why does the winter holiday have to be shorter if school starts the traditional time period? I don't see that we have needed to add days to the year!
Increased air conditioning cost starting earlier-hottest time of year. Spring sports cut short due to cold weather postponing playing time.
I would prefer a start date of Aug. 1st, but Aug. 8 would be a huge improvement.
Need to stay in synch with Charlottesville
it is inconceivable that you would begin school in the first or second week of August. Move all the teacher inservice stuff to immediately prior to start of school year, or do it for a few days after the week of Christmas. My kids watched movies for the last 10 days of hte school year after SOLs. Why are we wasting time on salaries if the teachers are just babysitting after the SOLs are done?
For students who participate in the Jefferson Swim League and Marching Band, Draft 3 is the only option that leaves time for vacation with families. Part of the reason that the AHS Marching Patriots have done so well is that the students have approximately 80 hours of rehearsal time prior to the start of school. If Draft 1 is used, there will be overlap between swimming and band camp. Draft 2 eliminates the overlap, but does not leave any time in between for vacations.
Crazy! Let the children enjoy summer!
Would actually prefer to start earlier like Draft 1 AND get out earlier like Draft 2
Early dismissal days are a waste of time.
If finishing the 2nd 9 weeks before Winter break is the priority, I would prefer an Aug 13th start but the end of the school year to be the Draft 1 date (combining the 8/13 start and the 8/8 finish) and adding in some extra time. I also think a 3 week break at Christmas is a little too long - I would rather see those days spread out. This gives students a mental break and not long stretches.
Beginning the school year prior to late August is very undesirable. Also, why do we have five early dismissal days? As a practical matter, no meaningful instruction occurs on these early dismissal days. Why bother to run the buses for a one-half day schedule?
Why do we have to start school so early? Doesn't our current schedule work fine.
August 8 is an unrealistic proposal. Neither students nor faculty will be emotionally or intellectually ready for so early a start date.
I do not agree with draft option 1 or 2. I see no benefit to starting school early. This will negatively impact and affect students who have summer jobs , ie lifeguard positions, they will have less time to work and earn money.
Draft 1: Although a longer Christmas break is laudable, I don't like the idea of an Aug 8th start since football athletes and marching band members (who practice before 8/8) will suffer from the heat index. If we were in New Hampshire or Minnesota, Aug 8th would be fine. Draft 2: Top ranked mainly because the May 24th end date gives families a head start on summer vacation plans. Many swim teams start practicing at this point. I also like it since I grew up with a similar type school year. Plus this matches university end dates a bit closer, allowing families better vacation flexibility. I thought the Christmas vacation length was just right - not too short and not too long. Draft 3: End date of 6/7 too late. Dislike the status quo!
Regardless of start/end date, the 10 day winter break should be left intact.

I believe that the August 8 start date would interfere with family vacations. For me as a working parent, a vacation later in the summer (late July or early August) is more convenient than one in June or early July.

Draft 3 is the only option that makes any sense. I only ranked the other two because the survey required this action for submission.

I would prefer year-round school to accommodate the academic demands of our community.

For parents who both work and have no nearby family, it is both inconvenient and costly to arrange care on early dismissal days. Either my husband or I would need to take each of these days as a vacation day. The weeks with only 2-4 days of school are bad enough. Most camp and child care services are on a weekly cost basis.

I don't love any of these. In particular, I don't like how many early dismissal days there are in drafts 2 and 3. Early dismissals are often wasted learning days, and they are very difficult for working parents to find child care. I like the shorter Christmas holiday in Draft 3, which makes sense for most families. I would vote for an edited version of Draft 1 with a slightly later start and a shorter Christmas holiday, and NO EARLY DISMISSALS.

Only will consider Draft 3. Other start dates are too early in year--increased air conditioning load for buildings, shortened work summers for students working, and unnecessary early starts.

I don't see the benefit of letting the students out so early in May, nor do I understand the benefit of having them return early in August. The majority of the country is on a mid-June to after Labor Day calendar, so it is already difficult to plan trips with family and friends who live in other areas.

Start dates earlier than Aug. 22 pretty much prevent students from participating in summer camps, jobs, internships, etc. given the way these are all presently structured. My daughter would not be able to attend her present summer camp with a start date earlier than Aug. 22.

Many sleep-away camp options that are enriching to the kids' education are lasting well into August. An early August start date would prevent the Albemarle kids to partake in these opportunities

I like the 3rd draft best because it eliminates some of the extra single days off during the school year that disrupts instruction.

An early start will conflict with a myriad of summer programs, camps, educational opportunities etc. well beyond the borders of Albemarle County. What precisely is the value of starting school so early in August? The early start was previously proposed, I thought, to accommodate the failed semesterization rammed through by the inept school administration. Please, learn from your mistakes. Stop attempting to fix things that aren't broken. The School Board should exert its authority, not rubber stamp the desires of a school administration which so obviously demonstrated its limitations last year.

August 8th is still summer! Schools will be too hot; swim leagues will have just ended; schedules will be too dissimilar to other family members' calendars.

The August 8 start is too early. From a family planning standpoint (and connected to parents work) early August is a key time to decompress/get away for a break.

Until I got to this page, I did not know whether "earlier" meant earlier in the day or earlier in the year. Please clarify.

I teach in Greene County Public Schools and it is VERY difficult to coordinate daycare on varying school breaks and would appreciate them somewhat similar.

True summer days are precious and few. As it is, it's disheartening to have to begin the school year before Labor Day. To begin on August 1st actually spurs me to think that we should move to another school division. Seriously.

According to a reliable source from the City School Administration, they have a strong preference for the August 22 start date. I would hope, for the good of the community, you will stick with the same. It seems to me that coordinating C-ville, Albemarle, and CATEC start dates would be desirable for all. If the City has no problem with this late start date, why does the County?

I have spoken with Jim Henderson from the city schools and they will definitely not even consider starting their schools on August 8th! It is very important for the community that the city and county schools coordinate their schedules for the sake of everyone in the area. There are many organizations, camps in and out of state, tennis and swim teams, family plans including family vacations that are a very high priority for many of us, that will be affected in a negative way if the start of school is any sooner than August 22. There are schools in VA who do not start until after Labor Day and I do not see any need for Albemarle County to start any sooner than when they are now starting!! That is early enough!

Many other schools will not start that early and it takes away from the children's time to be with friends and or family if we want to travel.

Ridiculous to think we would start school August 8th to benefit SOLs. Are you kidding? Who are we electing.....

Return to school August 8? This makes no sense for many families that actually do something in the summer months. Recall that band camps and athletic camps all begin before school, putting them well into July for Draft 1 and some of them for Draft 2. Maybe you should say what you are trying to accomplish here, because it makes no sense to me at all.

Start Sep 1st, Finish May 31th. No rain days - schools must be open always at regular day. - Parents should decide if send students to school regardless to whether buses available or not.

All provide sufficient calendar days of curriculum, with breaks at the appropriate times, VERY similar to the college calendars. Any/all would work Thanks

Early starts interfere with working schedules for summer jobs, summer courses, and vacations. Draft 1 and 2 are non-starters in our opinion and deserve the option to be ranked as 3 or below. There isn't a 2nd level rank that I want to place by default and it is infuriating to have to give it a rank I am not interested in simply because the computer program says so.

It is too late to make changes to a schedule that has been published and planned on for some time. Many people have vacation plans that cannot be cancelled simply because a local authority decides to play god. This is beyond infuriating, and my children will not be attending an early start whatever you choose to do.

I definitely support Draft 2 with the 1st semester ending prior to the winter break. I also support a shorter winter break.

Please consider when the Universities conclude in May and have their graduations. I feel that we would have a lot of conflicts with university and high school graduations if the high schools got out in early to mid may. Please also consider Marching Band camp that usually runs two and a half weeks before school begins. In draft 1 and 2 it would put those students as well as some student athletes returning to school mid to late July. That really hinders time for family vacations, student jobs and other camps and summer opportunities.

In any case, I think having the Wednesday off prior to Thanksgiving is important.

I do not support an Aug 8 start date because it would leave the summer break much too short. Students and teachers need time off, and families need time together.

Changing to earlier start & finish dates would disrupt the coordination of extra-curricular summer programs with public and private school sectors. The early start & finish may also impact students' choices and ability to participate in out-of-city/state programs that continue into early/mid-August. ALSO: HEAT FACTOR! Why put kids on UN-air-conditioned school buses for almost the entire month of August, typically the hottest month of the summer?! This is not only unpleasant but downright unhealthy and exhausting ... which does not promote good learning OR desire to go to school. Let's face it, we are acclimated to August being SUMMER VACATION!!! Going to school in early or mid-August throws our cycle of living OFF: DON'T do it!!

It is MOST important for our family that the Charlottesville and Albemarle school calendars be aligned. Without this, child care is very difficult. My son has multiple disabilities so "regular" child care options don't work, making it extra hard. Surely there are many families like ours with children in one system and a parent in another who would benefit from aligned schedules. Thanks.

Draft 3 is the only preference I have. I would not even consider Drafts 2 and 3 given the choice. Thank you.

*Stop the 90 minute classes. Teenagers, particularly boys, cannot sit and have a teacher lecture them for this period of time... college classes are 50 minutes. I asked my son how long in a 90 minute class a teacher talked. He said 91 minutes. *Require every high school teacher to prepare a detailed daily syllabus for each semester. These should be on line the first day of class in August. *Revise the credit given for missed assignments that are subsequently turned in. Many teachers hammer the kids by giving a score of 50% to the turned in late assignment. This is still an F. The teacher should grade the late assignment then reduce the letter grade by one level if the teach feels compelled to be punitive i.e. an A becomes a B.

The 9 week grading periods should definitely end before school breaks are taken for Christmas and Spring Break. There is no need for students (and parents) to stress over taking a test when they return. Also, as a parent, I DO NOT expect those exams/papers to be graded and returned to the students as soon as they return....teachers need those breaks too!

Children have summer jobs to even consider august 8 for starting school is the most foolish irresponsible thing I have ever heard. Further the cost of air conditioning the schools would be very expensive during this time. Also, this would cause huge conflictions with family travel plans because we would still get out in late may. Please do not consider any start other than August 22.

Calendars 1 and 2 are HORRIBLE in my opinion. Besides being a parent (of three very academically successful kids, one still in the system), I am a spouse of a teacher, and I am pretty sure that having the schools start mid August, our hottest month will not be successful. Another consideration: those first two calendars will make it hard for families to use August for holidays, even though this is the 'traditional' month, and also fits well with the lives of thousands of people working at U VA. Yet another consideration: good school systems north of us (where it is cooler) begin even later: many just after Labor Day.

My assumption is that the decision has already been made - because that is how AlbCo schools operate. I have heard from numerous sources that the county wants to start school early so that exams may be taken prior to Christmas. Where is the statistical analysis or data to support this decision? My thinking is that a kid who is looking forward to Christmas in 5 days and school being out is pretty unfocused on exams. One of the biggest problems with education is you guys keep making decisions based on "feelings". Show the data that supports starting school at the beginning of August and you will have the entire community in your corner -- or just make a unilateral decision and tell us parents/students tough - that's the way it is.

The beginning of August is entirely too early for school to begin. It will not make a difference in the education process. It takes Teachers as well as parents to make sure our children are learning and up to if not above standards.

It is beneficial for students to end the nine weeks and take exams before winter break.

Please show make up snow days for each option. That would help. Thanks.

Please do not take away from our students' and families much needed time to rest and relax---August 22 is by far the best of these options. Students and families are already being pushed too intensely throughout the academic year. I cannot imagine what the Board feels would be gained by this earlier schedule. August is also our hottest month and to have students taking PE and riding buses during the two hottest weeks of the year is putting students and staff at undue risk, and would also hinder the enjoyment of physical activity, which we know is crucial to our students' well being. Please do not handle this in the way that the schedule change at the high school was handled: please listen to the parents and teachers. Thank-you.

Actually, I do not agree with any of the proposals! I prefer the later start in August due to long standing family vacation time, and I would prefer the longer break at Christmas time for the same reason. However, if I had to choose I would pick the later start in August over the longer break in December.

I feel the students should start earlier to keep in line with other area schools. The August 8th date is great but the vacation at Christmas poses problems for childcare for folks that go back to work after the first of the year. The earlier dates also help families make better vacation plans.

I much prefer August to be part of summer vacation. Thanks for asking for input!

Half days seem a waste, especially in the elementary schools, and drafts 2 and 3 both have several of these. However, starting in early August doesn't seem practical as far as professional schedules, other school systems, and the economy go (local summer industries would suffer). As a parent, I would rather have a shorter summer (as we do now) and longer mid-year breaks (winter). What is the reasoning for the proposed change?

August 8 or even Aug. 13 is truly inconceivable.

I would love the early start date, but then I think about sports and band practices and can't imagine that those would start in July. That would really stink for family vacations. But if these "mandatory" camps could be incorporated into the school schedule then I would definitely vote for the earliest start time.

The August 22nd start date is far and away the best of the three. It gives the students a nice break, cuts around Labor Day, which makes more sense, and the teachers and students won't have to be in the hot school during most of the dog days. Please heavily consider using the third calendar.

The more time off there is during the year, the harder it is for the students to engage fully.

Are you people out of your minds? Do you hate your children? Have you never heard of summer camp? European vacations? You can start whenever you want but my child will have a summer vacation. It is 500 degrees in August, these kids need to be at the pool.

There is no justification given why the start date has to be changed. Without justification it is difficult to select the options. If there is no justification for changing the start date, I would like to see the starting date should be the existing start date, August 24th.

I don't like the fact that Albemarle County Schools start before labor day and the thought that they would start even earlier is absurd. Structuring our school calendar around SOLs is crazy.

It is extremely important to me that my child be able to relax on our family vacation over Christmas break. This would be enabled by her taking her midterms before we leave. Thank you for considering my input.

I only ranked the alternatives above because the survey requires it. I dislike all three options and choose to rank each of them with zero. It makes little sense to me that our kids start in August at all. It's the hottest month in Central Virginia, so why not cut down on a/c costs and keep them out of school until September? As for adding days to spring and winter break, for those of us who cannot afford to take off from work for all or some of those days, and must incur child care costs, this vacation extension adds even more costs. I would really appreciate an explanation of why you are considering starting school so early. And urge you not to adopt any of these alternatives.

School should not begin any earlier in the summer. I believe school should begin after Labor Day.

I hate the thought of school starting in early August! I was hoping to see it changed to AFTER Labor day. I do not want my child participating in PE outside nor do I want her on an un-airconditioned bus in August heat. Why have the kids out early in May when pools aren't open, oceans are still cold and weather can be chilly. Parents like us, plan vacations in the summer months, not May. You also need to consider sports conditioning and practice. Football is hot enough with out bumping up the season. Seriously, what's the thinking here? Summer break is just that. It's not Spring/Summer break. I chose draft 3 as my pick but if it were up to me, I'd make changes to this one as well.

Starting school any earlier in august takes away many families opportunities for summer vacation. Especially those families whose children are involved in swim programs.

All calendars presented have end of school just before or after Memorial day. It seems adding those last few days after the holiday wouldn't be productive; kids wouldn't be focused . Having the shorter break over Christmas makes most sense.

The current schedule works very well for my family. If the schools were to get out earlier in May and return early in August, the kids would miss out on many activities that traditionally take place in August because of school conflicts. Also, I would think that energy costs would be a consideration since August is frequently one of the hottest months and would require more to keep the schools to a comfortable temperature.

The poor kids summers are getting shorter and shorter! This needs to stop! The kids are going to get sick of school faster and are more in likely to drop out sooner then before!

My son is usually away in camp (which he very much enjoys) the first two weeks of August which would be severely curtailed with drafts 1&2. I don't see what the benefit is to starting earlier and finishing earlier since the number of days is the same. It would be nice if the drafts had a list of pros and cons so I could understand what issue is trying to be resolved.

I like a combination of Draft 1 and 2 (early start and early finish) - my suggestions: Half days only on 12/21 and last day of school 10/11 a full day Day off 10/12 Or 10/15 Day off 11/21 Christmas Break 12/24-1/4 Day off 3/15 Last Day of School 5/23

The biggest consideration in ranking was the length of the Christmas holiday - the full two weeks is hard to schedule around for parents that both work.

You'd screw up Marching Band practices by starting so early. A later start is better.

I cannot understand why it is so necessary to start so early. Northern schools (some thought to be better than those in the south) have no problem starting school after Labor Day! I do not want school to start at the beginning of August! If this is about the semester program enacted by the schools a few years ago (a big mistake in my opinion), it is wrong to so drastically change the calendar for the needs of only some of the students. Please do not make a bigger mistake and start school early. I know other schools in the area do it, but it will be a disruption to the students' summer and very disruptive to families in general. I can tell you, many parents will ignore the early start date and start school when they wish. You know it.

Could you please refresh my memory as to WHY we need to start school earlier? The REASON for the discussion should be stated somewhere.

Early August start interferes with summer camps. More than one week is too much for Christmas break.

I strongly support the later start date August 22nd. My family is only available for family vacation and travel in the month of August. Such a dramatic change to begin school so early in the summer does not support valuable family time. August is the hottest month of summer, and not conducive to productive learning. How would this impact energy expense for the school system?

Draft 3 is the best option. I see no reason to end the school year before Memorial Day. The pools aren't even open before that - and there aren't lifeguards available for it to be possible to open earlier. I also think the extra long Christmas break is unnecessary. August is usually a popular month for family vacations - especially for those who are trying to match up with out of state families. August 22 is an "early" start, compared to many other school districts that don't start until after Labor Day.

It would be helpful to understand the reasoning behind beginning so early. Many school districts around the country begin after Labor Day which enables children to go to camps, participate in August sports camps and spend time with family. May is not a good month to begin swim teams here as the water is still cold. Also, this constant restructuring of the school calendar makes it very difficult to book family spring break vacations in advance.

Emphatically, no. Families have summer plans/houses/trips that go well in to August. It's still very hot and humid (No power savings there). The timing of the school year as it stands, closer to a change of season, makes sense: "on with the new". NO NO NO

Many summer camps our children attend in August do not end until August 15th -- to air condition the schools for most of August - the hottest month in Charlottesville, seems wasteful and costly to the County. Riding the hot un-airconditioned buses to and from school in early August would be unbearable.

For the over 2000 kids that participate in the Jefferson Swim league the early start would be terrible. Many families wait to travel until after the end of the season which is generally the last weekend in July.

We have already been starting school too early in the summer. Under no circumstances do I want my child to start even earlier. If you need more instructional time, eliminate the seminars (ie bullying) and surveys you waste our time and tax money with.

Please do not create a shorter summer for our children! They need time to recharge and relax if they are to do their best during the school year!

Extended holiday breaks of more than 2 weeks are not good for working parents, nor is a very early end of the school year unless all the local camps adapt their schedules too. With college students as counselors, many camps could not start as early in May as Option 1 (and maybe option 2) would require.

Draft 1 in particular would be very challenging to working parents, particularly the prolonged holiday break. Please consider families with two full time working parents. Thank you.

I would not want any earlier start date than we currently have. In fact I would prefer to go back to a start date after labor day.

Half days make it REALLY difficult on working parents. I also prefer no half days as there's not as much learning time since those days are rushed and kids have to eat lunch at 10 a.m.! I prefer the later starting days with less days off during the year (again thinking of the needs of working parents).

Students that attend band camp will have summer vacation time end in July which gives fewer options for vacation time while the weather is warmer. Students would not also be able to complete summer classes at PVCC as they usually do not end until the second week of August. Starting earlier can cost more in electricity for air conditioning running during the warmer time of early August. I do like using the half days for school year. When I attended high school locally, we had snow days built into the school year (10 of them). If we did not use them all, they got taken off at Spring Break (which was only 1-3days) or at the end of the school year. If we went over the amount then, we had to make them up.

Much in favor of a later start date. Not a fan of spring break being in March. Christmas break could be longer with a later end date.

Please don't start school on august 8 or 13!

I prefer option 2, but with 10 days off at Christmas and a later end date in June.

I don't really care for either Draft 2 or 3 because having two weeks off during the Christmas holiday is very important in our family due to a split household and child sharing. I like school ending in late May, as opposed to early June, but it's not critical. I also prefer three days off during Thanksgiving so we have time to visit relatives in Texas. Scheduling the October Teacher's Work Day on Columbus Day might also help parents who have the holiday off of work as well. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the schedule.

Academically either draft 2 or 1 make the most sense since both end the first semester before winter break. This is why Draft 3 is unacceptable. Draft 2 is preferable because of the earlier end date in May. The extra time at Winter Break is nice, but I think both teachers and students would prefer to get out earlier in May.

I am not sure I understand the rationale for starting the school year so early in August (though we have liked the still-in-August opening). Does it save costs somehow? Psychologically, it seems easier for children to match the seasonal changes at least slightly; usually it is cooling off in late August. It also seems strange to end too early in May. The end of May makes better sense to me (in fact better than into June), since it does signal a real start to the summer.

Consider matching up spring break with other local schools, e.g. UVA, JM, Army JAG, etc. Final week of Aug 22 start is worthless -- 2 1/2 days after Memorial Day. I'd pull my kids.

I believe it is important for students to take their semester exams before winter vacation. In this way, students are in the habit of studying, reviewing, testing, and then they can have a worry free break to celebrate the holidays with family. I also think it would be nice to be out of school by Memorial Day so that families will be able to take advantage of pre-season deals on vacations.

Was lengthening the school day considered as an option to shortening the school year?

I personally like the after labor day start. Maybe it's because I am from jersey and we never went back before labor day. Especially since you have to take off of school anyway. What is the point in starting then having a long weekend. Anything earlier than that just doesn't make much sense. There are still summer things happening and it is still so hot.

I would prefer a combination of draft 1 and 2. I like the start date of Aug. 13 but I think it would be nice to make the winter break 2 weeks long, as it has been the last several years (almost 3 weeks in draft 1 is too long especially since most classes will be year-long this year). Have a full day off 11/21 instead of the 1/2 days on 11/21 AND 12/21. Suggest moving the teacher work days on 1/2 to 2/19 & on 5/21 to April because that's a long month to go without even a long weekend. They could also be potential snow-make-ups. The current spring break in draft 2 could be moved later by one week. Then have the year end May 24th. I don't see the point of having them end any more before Memorial Day because pools and etc. aren't even open yet.

I view drafts 1 & 2 as completely unacceptable. The third calendar is the best choice. I strongly disagree with sending kids to school in early August when it is so hot --hour long bus rides, PE & sports- create hazardous & unhealthy conditions. The first 2 weeks of August are traditional time for family vacations & camps and an important part of my family's life, allowing us to get together with family in other areas who have these weeks off. Lastly, I strongly oppose changing the calendar to cater to the semesterized secondary schools schedule adopted last year, or to cater to the SOLs. Enough already! Furthermore, shame on you for only giving 11 days for comment on this topic, and for doing it during summer break. We deserve better.

Due to long standing family commitments and traditions that take place in mid-August, along with summer camps our daughters attend in August, starting school any earlier than Aug. 22nd would jeopardize these commitments.

We usually estimate summer vacation will be 10 weeks - getting back to school and doing back to school preparation for August 8th may be short for a number of families. We will be on vacation at that time. This proposal/survey should have been ready for parents before the end of the school year. I taught for years; it's not that difficult.

It was not clear what the impetus was for this suggested change to the start date. Better coupling with SOL testing? Better distribution of holidays within the terms? It would have been good to know why the Board is considering a calendar change.

I am strongly opposed to drafts 1 and 2 and resent having to rank them as it gives the appearance that I support them. Do NOT shorten summer for the students.

Boo! Don't steal our kids' summers.

PLEASE have holidays coincide with the city schools' calendars, especially spring break!!!!

I like the early start and the idea of ending school at the end of May because frankly, the last week of school in June is always a big waste of time - the kids are on mental vacation once the SOL's pass. I cannot however, vote for the Aug 8 start calendar as my first choice because the Winter Break of 2.5 weeks is RIDICULOUS. 2 full weeks is hard enough to take! The only way I could see going to a longer winter break would be if we went to a year round school and seriously curtailed summer vacation in trade for 4 seasonal 3 week breaks or something like that. Thanks.

Leave the schedule alone.

I do not want our children to begin school any early than it already is. We expect our children to have summer jobs and many pools do not open full-time until after June 10th. We also believe that everyone involved (teachers, students, families) all deserve 2 weeks off for winter break. The students have plenty of time to learn what they need to. Our first high-schooler will be graduating with at least 8 AP's on her transcript.

keep summer for other activities, not school!

2 1/2 weeks off at Christmas is CRAZY!!! As a teacher AND a parent I know there is enough regression in the classroom that requires re teaching. I never understood why the board insisted on giving the students 2 full weeks at Christmas. Let's be a little more realistic about the MAIN point - EDUCATION NOT extra vacation time. I find it hard to believe the August 8 date is even a realistic option.

In Draft 1, I like how the teacher work days are lumped in with the Winter Break days to make for a longer holiday break. That would be helpful for families wishing to travel. It would be nice if you could apply the longer winter break idea to any of the new schedules. I don't like how the winter holiday break seems to be shortened in Draft 2 and 3.

I Really like the new proposals. It is important to me for the kids to have breathing space in the year, which is why I chose Draft 1 as my favorite. I also REALLY like ending in May so that we still have nice weather to enjoy at the beginning of break! Thanks for the opportunity to have a voice in the planning!

I really support Draft 1 as it allows better timing for assessments. No real academic instruction takes place after the SOL's in May there is no need to keep the students in school after the third week in May. Further the students are better off being in school during August when the weather is so hot outside. Everyone benefits from a schedule such as Draft 1.

I really do not understand why this schedule would even be considered. The schedule is great just the way it is!!! I do not mind change, but there seems to be a lot of need for major changes in this county. If you want to change something, then look at the possibility of changing the travel schedule for athletes in this county, particularly at AHS. Students have to get up -go to school, travel 2 to 2 1/2 hours to their game, play the game, travel back and arrive at midnight or later, and then come home and do homework-all of this on a school night for many, many students. Come shadow one of these student athletes, particularly for spring sports, and see how hard it really is! All of these changes to the schedule is getting really old

Starting the school year as early as the 8th of August makes it difficult for kids who attend camp programs or sports camps to do so. My family spends several weeks in NY in August, where my son has attended camp since he was a preschooler. He plans to enroll in the Counselor in Training program for his 11th and 12th grade summers, in order to prepare for being a counselor in college--school starting so early would make it very difficult for him to do this. I do not see what is gained by beginning the year so much earlier. In addition, would it not cost more due to having to cool all the buildings in the hottest month of the year? Please provide some information as to why these options are being considered.

We would prefer for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving to be a full day off; not an early dismissal. Do not need so much time off after New Years as in Draft 1. Prefer the earlier first day of school.

What is the point of trying any of these changes? I like the schedule the way it is now. Shortening the Christmas break is not necessary. If anything, I would rather see a later start, like after Labor Day. It is way too hot in August to be starting back at school at the beginning of the month. And I can't even start to imagine the cost of implementing something like this! Aren't we supposed to be trying to budget??

please consider option 3. It is too hot to go back to school in early August, and we own a vacation week that we would never be able to use again if school starts that early. It is also a very big hardship for working parents to find childcare, and 2.5 weeks of Christmas break would be difficult. 1.5 weeks is all that is needed. I would think that it would be good for the summer camps to have extra weeks in the summer. I also like spring break being around Easter as we celebrate this religious holiday. My children and all of their friends are in complete agreement in this matter. It would also hurt the swim teams, as it is too cold to start swimming in early May, and JSL's would be impacted if school were to start any earlier.

My greatest concern are studies -- with which I am not greatly familiar -- indicating that longer breaks between academic sessions DO incur lapses in learning. My eldest son attends a private school and has what equates to a two-week-long spring break; this year, his grades flagged in the last quarter because he got out of his school "groove" and he said also that the teachers acted very pressed and urgent to complete that last quarter. I just don't think that longer summers are justified. I'd actually prefer more of a year-round schedule to one in which longer periods of non-study are available. I also wonder about the effects of these proposed schedules on working families.

Please allow a full day off the Wed. of Thanksgiving week.

Having Spring break in March precludes many families from taking vacations that require nicer, warmer weather. It also moves the break away from the traditional celebration of Easter, which is important to our family.

August 8th is way too early to begin school- it's no longer "summer" vacation if we begin that early. getting out earlier does NOT help working parents, as most camps begin in mid-June. I am curious WHY we would begin this early. If the early start is related to SOL testing, I vigorously protest the fact that now even our school calendar is dictated by these tests. The SOLS are good in theory, but the majority of teachers would admit that they interfere more with learning than help the process. I truly hope we do not begin school in early August!!!

strongly oppose starting school year in early August as it would interfere with family vacations (and its still summer); letting out May 30 is still plenty early (and its not even summer yet)

I chose draft 3 as my first choice, but would like for the children to have off jan. 2 also.

i would prefer to keep the beginning and end of the school year to stay close to the same as 2010-2011 school year. works out better for work and vacations

August 8 is way too early to start school. Families are still vacationing in August.

Our family has a strong preference for Draft 3. This schedule most closely resembles a traditional schedule - which allows families with children in other schools (college, private, etc.) a more balanced family schedule. Also, the Aug. 8 start schedule allows for a very long Christmas break, which might be disruptive to the continuity of education. The rest of the schedule is very similar for each of the start dates so I think it comes down to messing up summer (and athletic team start dates) and prolonging Christmas break.

I would like to know the motivation behind considering an earlier start date for school. It is not clear to me what advantages this brings.

It would be crazy, inconvenient, depressing, awful, for the kids to go back to school in early August! I mean for kids and families alike. August is summer and always has been--we would feel the season had been violated. Why the rush to get them out early in May? The rest of the world (universities, camps, etc) are organized around a late-May to mid-June school conclusion. Please don't upset the community's basic sense of the round of the seasons! Thanks.

I don't like any of the draft plans, but the later the first day of school is, the better, in my opinion.

In general it is easier not to have so many half-days and seemingly random holidays and teacher workdays scattered across the calendar. The kids hardly pay attention during short weeks and don't at all on 1/2 days. On top of that, these shortened weeks and 1/2 days make childcare challenging.

I don't understand the logic of starting as early as August 8. This makes an extremely short summer and severely limits vacation options for families whose children play sports (baseball, lacrosse, soccer, swim team) which all run through the end of July. I also don't understand the logic of a long winter break, nor do I understand why Spring Break isn't always associated with Easter. I think Spring Break should either be the week before or the week after Easter. Also, what happened to Columbus Day? Of the three options, I strongly urge you to chose option #3 with the latest start date.

Draft one more closely aligns us with college schedules. We do not like half day schedules, it disrupts work schedules, and is costly to send kids for such a short time. I don't think the students have enough time to really get into their lessons, except for first period.

I do not like half days for students.

I'm not clear about the benefits to starting the school year earlier. I do like Draft 3 because winter break is shrotened to ~10 days and not two full weeks. With two full-time working parents, it is difficult to find childcare around the Christmas holiday and my job as a nurse requires working through the holiday. I find starting the very beginning of Aug (as in draft 1) to be abysmal. I am used to starting school the day after Labor Day and find late Aug to be early enough. If there was an immeidate benefit, I would give the calendar more consideration. CCurrently, I am happy to leave the start date where it is and shorten Winter Break.

I agree with ending the semester before winter break.

I do not understand why we would want to deprive children of their summer. I do not understand why school can't start after Labor Day, like it did when I was a child. It makes me sad because it seems like another example of how our culture is pushing so hard to make children into busy little adults when they are still children, or to turn school into a kind of... day-care operation. I think the middle school schoolday is at least an hour too long; the day ought to end at 3, not 4 pm. But I suppose I'm getting off-topic here! Basic point: let summer break be as long as possible, let school start in the fall, not in the middle of the summer.

Surely you are joking moving to 8/8. I would assume this is a bluff to make the 8/13 look reasonable. We had early starts in GA. It's hard to learn on the warm days and kids still want to go to the pool. I think most college are still in the late August mode and if it works for them well maybe it will work for the kids. August is a great month for vacation especailly if you are driven by an organizaiton that has a year end or quarterly results due in July.

I think that the 9 week grading period ending before winter and spring break is very important and thus Draft 2 is the one I ranked at the top. However, since many of our summer activity/jobs go until later in, Draft 1 would be very difficult for my kids.

I don't care for an extended Christmas break which seems to be part of the long school year created by the Aug 8 start date. Just don't think that kind of time off is needed. I like all the caleandars get done by end of May.

I like the idea of my children getting out of school immediately following SOL testing. Having been an active parent who volunteers in the classroom weekly, I know for a fact that teachers do have to teach to the test. Therefore, the time spent after SOL testing is complete is pretty much wasted time. I also like draft 2 for the half days presented as well as the shorter Winter Break.

I don't want my children not to have a summer. I also don't want to spend all of my vacation having to take off to manage teacher inservice days of Draft 1. Seriously, we work. Draft 3 is the only workable option for working parents.

August 8 is far too early to start - please start at the end of august. The creep of school opening to ever earlier dates is awful.... Thanks for listening!

Most important considerations: NOT the start date. The August 8th start is the only one that allows for a reasonable Christmas break. For those families with extended family out of state, the two week Christmas break is SO important. ALSO, the Wednesday-Friday of Thanksgiving week should be holidays. Any of the three start dates would be acceptable for us if these two holidays (Thanksgiving and Christmas) were reasonably long enough to allow for travel to spend time with family out of state.

Why not end the school year at the completion of actual educational instruction, which appears to coincide with SOL testing. The school days post-SOL consist of movie watching, multiple recess periods, ect.

Either Draft 1 or Draft 2 would be acceptable in our opinion; the problem with Draft 3 is that the grading period ends after the winter break -- we feel this would result in either nothing significant being taught the final weeks, or students faring poorly due to the loss of classroom time at the end of the session.

The August 22 start time has the county schools starting at the same time as UVA and permits vacation time in August. August is the only time UVA does not hold classes. It would have been helpful to see a statement of why changes from the usual start time were deemed desirable. The large number of actual and proposed recent changes make ACPS seem restless and make families uptight. Thank you.

Simply starting the week prior to labor day is early enough in my opinion, as a parent and teacher!! The 8th (and 13th) seems unimaginable and cuts the summer way too short.

I'm personally not thrilled with any of the calendars. I think things should go back to the old way of school starting after Labor Day. I don't see the need to be off for all the smaller holidays like President's Day, Memorial Day, and MLK Day. When I was in school, we attended on those days and actually learned something about that day while we were in school. As far as Spring Break, it just makes more sense for Spring Break to fall with Easter; most school systems finish up on Good Friday and have next week off.

I don't understand the many 1/2 days in the Aug. 22 calendar due to added transportation costs. However, I prefer that ACPS have a break compatible with Charlottesville City Schools since a different schedule would be difficult on working parents. I think there needs to be less emphasis on the SOLs and that instruction and learning should continue throughout the quarter, regardless of when SOLs are held!

Our school bus is not air conditioned and August is too hot.

Since the majority of the classes at AHS and WAHS will be offered yearlong, I am confused as to why we need to change the calendar. More than 50% of the students at AHS participate in sports, mostly during the spring. Has anyone contacted athletic directors to see how the calendar changes affect these students. Changing our spring break affects game schedules for others in our district. As you remember, AHS district is not the same as WAHS and MoHS. It also affects the length of the season. AHS had teams playing well into June this year. According to your calendar offerings these student athletes will be playing 3-4 weeks into their "summer". How will the school handle these team events during the "summer break"?

draft one is a very good model can be followed with change in starting dates later then Aug 8 with spill over of end of school year in early June (if some parents think it may be too early to start school that time). A good feature of draft one is how the no student days are hooked with Holiday time to give good break for kids and parents. Also very important implication is that for holiday traveling everyone tend to start Friday evening. Here we can start on Thursdays and come back on Mondays and tuesday and avoid Holiday traffic and accidents or long lines at the airport. (A very important safty step for families with small children). Irrespective of when u start or end the school year pl follow the basic layout of Draft one. Thank you.

A long Christmas break and an early end to the school year more closely aligns with a college calendar. I believe it is best to align semester breaks with the Christmas break. I believe that half-days are inefficient and will likely contribute to greater absences since they generally precede holidays or long weekends. An earlier release in the spring makes sense since so much time is wasted after SOLs and AP exams with fluff.

If Draft 3 allowed for a last date before Memorial Day I would be in favor of it most of all. I dislike Draft 1 because of the early start and also due to the almost 3 weeks out at Christmas. I also do not prefer the half days, I think it's a waste of time and gas. I still think if we budgeted our time, as much as we attempt to budget our money, we could have a Labor Day to Memorial Day schedule, which would be my favorite.

The length of the breaks make it difficult for families with two working parents to cover. I don't understand the logic of these calendars.

I love spending summer days with my four children. Please leave summer break alone! There is nothing wrong with the school calendar the way it is. It would only mean having to pull my children out of school more during the year if you start the date Aug 8th. Living life and traveling is educational in itself. I dont want to cram all of our trips into two months of the year. Not a fan of the proposed change!!

Year Round school!

It is a real advantage for high school students trying to gain summer employment to get out in the job market earlier.

Undue hardship would result from starting the school year early.

Draft 2 - Maintain full days on October 11 & 12. Provide 3 full days for Thanksgiving Break (November 21-23). Make December 21 a full day. Christmas Break should be a full two weeks, with classes resuming January 7. Use January 2, 3 & 4 for Professional Learning Days. Make March 15 a full day. Schedule the last day of school for May 24 (including snow days) and work backwards in the calendar for unused snow days (better to schedule and not use than the other way around). Use these last few days as Professional Learning Days if needed. Additional comments: Partial Days and Partial Weeks are very disruptive and unproductive. The calandar should be structured to avoid these situations which will maximize the instructional time

I think starting school even earlier in August (either the 8th or the 13th) is absolutely ridiculous--the summer break is short enough. (As we all know, a number of Virginia schools do not start until after Labor Day.) I do not see the benefit of either the 8/8 or 8/13 calendars beyond finishing the first semester before the December holiday break. Correct me if I am wrong, but I believe that exams were before the holiday break and school started around August 22 for each of the past four years. The only reason this became an issue in 2010-2011 was the short-sighted adoption of the 4 X 4 schedule. Finally, if school starts on 8/8 or 8/13, when would fall athletes be expected to start practice?

Why is a new start date being considered? I can't vote until I know the reasons behind altering the start/end dates for the school year. Unless there is a valid reason for shifting the start/end dates, I vote to leave it as is. I have only entered rankings for the second question above because I am not allowed to enter my comments without filling in those rankings. This is a flawed survey unless you allow voters the option to leave the starting dates as they normally stand. Thank you.

School year is too long! Cut 10 days from students and 15 days from staff development. Your not allowing children to be children. Good students will always succeed.

Anything but the Aug 22nd start are not viable options. Aug 8 and Aug 13 start are Absolutely not an option. Horrific!

Extend the school year to the end of June start school right after Labor day.

This makes more sense in terms of summer employment, swim team, etc.

The Aug 22 option doesn't cut short time with other relatives who are more likely on the later schedule, be it college siblings , cousins , or other. Also, leaves more time for summer jobs before school. Finally, good for our athletes to have 3 weeks to focus on sport, before they need to focus on classes.

My concern with Draft #2 and #3 is the short Winter Break. A 2 week Winter Break is needed for students, families and employees. Adding additional days at the end of May to allow for the 2 week Winter Break seems reasonable. The half-days for students are a great idea.

I would like to see the kids start school AFTER Labor Day and end school in late June. The weather is still so hot in August when school starts and somewhat cool in June when school ends. Wouldn't we be saving on energy cost by starting school in September?

I am concerned for many reasons about an early start date as the first draft outlines. For one, it is still so incredibly hot in the beginning of August and I fear the elementary students outdoor recess and PE time would be significantly limited during the first few weeks of school. Secondly, for many who participate on swim teams during the summer, there would be very little time for vacation after the season ends. It is TOO EARLY!

I am not at all in favor of Draft 1 or Draft 2. Actually "summer vacation" should be all of June, all of July and all of August, returning after Labor Day weekend. Could that be Draft 4? There is so much pressure on children these days. A real summer to enjoy sports such as swim team and camps and travel should be made available to all children . Much is to be learned outside of the classroom having a full summer over three full months. Please do not deprive our children of this vital area of learning and much needed relaxation.

Draft 3 but with 2 weeks Christmas break. Similar to this coming year.

Draft 3 allows a full summer break, which is the best time for family travel, and does not stretch out the school year with lots of little breaks, which disrupts continuity. I especially like the modest break at Christmas. Two weeks plus is like starting the year again. Draft 1 is the worst of all worlds with a truncated summer and constant breaks during the academic year. Draft 2 keeps the students in school, but to a fault. The May 17 last day is far too early. My son's cousins in NJ do not end school until June 20-25. Drafts 1 and 2 limit time for an extended visit to July, while Draft 3 keeps August in the picture. My wife and I resoundingly favor Draft 3.

I definitely like the options that have the first semester finishing prior to the winter break.

August weather is unpleasant in albemarle. We often escape weather with water pay, sleep-away camp, and family gatherings upstate New York. I cannot imagine my children on the hot school buses or what the electric bill would be to adequately air condition the buildings. Teachers can find a way to teach when the can. The end of the sol is not the last day of school

I think the children would really like the early release days in option 2 better than the days off. I also think that giving them more early release days instead of complete days off lets the children still get last minute help from the teachers. It is too bad that they can not get at least 2 a month, instead of one full day missed.

Are the many half days necessary for the Aug. 22 and 8 start calendars? Why not change to full days and holidays? It seems like the half days would require extra unnecessary transportation funds. I prefer the Aug. 22 start simply because it would have similar holidays as the Charlottesville City Schools. A different schedule would be hard on working parents. The holidays in for the Aug. 8 start calendar are too long and disruptive for students' routines and hard on working parents. Please don't allow learning to stop after SOLs! Is this the reason for the proposed start change?

Keep synchrony with C'ville Schools

August is traditionally a month where many take vacations. A late August start date is already difficult for families trying to plan vacations. It virtually eliminates the Labor Day weekend as a good vacation time.

I would have great concerns about my child participating in physical education during such a hot month as August. Would much prefer to have the children start school later and end later in the spring.

WHO IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BENEFIT?! NOT A WORKING PARENT!! Draft 1: summer break too short; winter break too long (working parents can't take that much time off from work); Spring break should coincide with Passover/Easter when families travel and/or desire time for holiday celebrations. Draft 2: Early dismissal days mean working parents have to take MORE days off from work resulting in lost wages or PAY for child care (lost income); Spring break should coincide with Passover/Easter. Draft 3: Too many early dismissal days - see above (draft 2). The school calendars for 2010 -2011 and 2011-2012 look great. Why change it? What is the reasoning/argument for changing the school calendar? How do parents get that information?

The third choice makes more sense with regard to the Christmas and New Year's Holiday as well as the spring break. Beginning in early or mid-August and ending in early May would make scheduling difficult for most of us working families. I am in favor of returning to the schedule which would have them end the first week of June and have an after Labor day start date.

I prefer the school calendar as it is now. I assume the main reason to move start date up is to accommodate the block schedule semester classes. I prefer the 8/22 start date, but have comments on the 8/22 calendar put forth: Why does school year end so early (5/30) and only have 19 holidays? Is this to set up the change to the earlier start date for the following year? Why are there so many half days (5 in total)? In my opinion, half days are not as efficient as full school days. - remove the half day on 10/25 and have a full day off on 11/21 - remove the have day on 3/21 and have a full day off on 12/21 - remove the have day on 5/30 and have half day on 12/20 - add more vacation days to winter holiday. - end school year in June

I think 2 1/2 weeks off of school in draft 1 is too much time off during cold weather. I also like getting out of school in May. I think moving up the start and end date is a great idea and I support it! Thanks for allowing us to provide input!

I think we already start rather early and getting out of school in mid may would be awful for our family. I would like to know why these dates are being considered.

I think this calendar is a lot more family friendly. I much prefer the Aug. 8 start date. For those of us who have kids in collegem it also provides more flexibility with family time in June vs. August when the college student head back to school. I also think the days off during the school year make much more sense.

Please consider making the school year longer. Our children would really benefit from a longer school year. Getting out in May would cause serious child care issues for those of us with elementary age children.

Stop catering to the SOL's schedule

Suggest starting the first Wednesday after labor day.

It is very difficult for working parents to take more than one full week off at a time to accommodate breaks, particularly at Christmas and spring break. Please consider that not all of us have the luxury of staying at home with our children and have limited time we are able to take from work - and while alternative care can be arranged, it is often expensive.

I do not understand the desire for school to end in the middle of May instead of the traditional June. Maybe if this reasoning was more fully explained the layout of these calendars would make more sense. I have chosen Draft 3 as my first choose but I do not understand the addition of mulple half days. Half days in the past have not resulted in any educational enrichment for the students so why add more? Draft 2 has a very extended summer period. It seems it would take longer for the students to get back up to speed the next Fall. Draft 1 has an extended winter break which may be difficult for parents to cover if they both work! Not crazy over any of the options presented!

I completely disagree with Aug 8 start date and a long Christmas break. As a full time working parent, it is very difficult to find and fund a large Christmas break for childcare. I think families need August to continue to have family time and start to think about transition back into the school year by middle August. As far as the added projects and work over breaks. Shorten the breaks and do not allow teachers to give out work over breaks. Long periods of time off are actually disruptive to the school year because the children get out of the flow of going to school and it is hard to transition them back in! Also, what is air conditioning going to cause in early/mid August???

I like the idea of finishing the second nine weeks prior to the winter break in conjunction with having a longer mid year vacation. I am also in favor of having less time in school after SOLs, this often seems to be fairly useless time and if snow day make ups are added it makes even less sense.

Why could we not add an extra half hour/45 minutes to the day to make up the extra time. I like the idea of getting out earlier but feel that 8/8 is too early.

I'm not even sure what the business case is for making the change. Is it to somehow save money? Is it going to lengthen the school year? In order to provide better input, more information is needed. Otherwise, I would rather leave it as is.

1) Many family activities are scheduled in August. Starting at that time of year is difficult as we are forced to choose btw school and family. Many areas North of central Virginia start after labor day, so mid-August is difficult enough. 2) Easter has become a largely secular holiday celebrated by most of our country. It is difficult enough not havining the Holy days preceeding Easter off as we observe it as a religious time, but the following Monday is necessary so that we and most families can choose to spend Easter with family and travel on Monday. My family is forced to choose between family and pulling our kids from school. This year we will pull our kids from school.

It seems to me that we could have a calander that started 22 August and ended by Memorial Day if we moved the staff development days to coincide with holidays or weekends. Every working family in Albemarle County with school-aged children are inconvenienced and financially impacted by the staff development days. I support the staff development, and i think it is necessary, but it should be scheduled in a way that does not impact Albemarle County student families.

Sorry to see that the 2 days in the beginning of November were reduced to 1. Thank you for letting us all participate in the survey.

A lot of the kids are still in camps during the beginning of august. Let the kids enjoy their summers and BE KIDS!!!!

actually school should start after Labor Day Holiday and focus should beplaced on completion of course work in a more efficient manner. Even if we need to stay on later into June as from what I can see the class time in late May/June is not value added, with little to no homework after SOLS.

I believe Draft Numbers 1 & 2 place an undue burden on working families to provide extra childcare due to the prolonged "winter" break. Draft 3 appears to most closely follow the current calendar and would keep scheduling "out of school" activities simpler and correspond with working families schedules. Thank you for providing this opportunity for input.

Please consider the effect this will have on working parents, when camps are not available in early May. In addition it can be very hot in early august and the children may not be able to get outside for recess.

Please, no half-days! And keep Christmas time off to 2 weeks or fewer.

Draft 1 is a terrible choice for families with two working parents, and I believe families with two working parents represent a majority of those attending ACPS. The extended holiday vacation time means we have to try to find childcare for almost an extra week. Option #2 is not ideal, either, as it means school lets out before many of the summer camps are in session. Please consider the needs of working parents and stick with Option #3. We have a hard enough time arranging childcare for our kids during holidays and summer, especially if we have more than one child. Thank you.

Why try to tinker with what is not broken! Concentrate on what needs to be fixed! Leave the Summer to the families. There is no need to tamper with the start date. The cost of cooling the school alone during the hottest days of summer ought to be enough to keep us from starting so soon. If anything start later!

The 13 days off at Cristmas in draft 1 is completely unacceptable. Not only does it disrupt the childrens' learning, but it puts a tremendous and unnecessary strain on working families. I don't think this draft should even be a consideration, particularly for young children who need shildcare when school is not in session.

Neither calendar option has spring break linked to Easter weekend AND the 2nd quarter ending prior to the Winter Break. In my opinion, both are important. Not linking Spring Break to Easter weekend, could result in low attendance a few days before or after March 31. Ending the 2nd quarter after the Winter Break is not favored by teachers.

Do not start school any earlier than Aug. 22 and Aug. 29 would be even better.

Draft 1 has 13 school days off at Christmas. That option would be EXTREMELY difficult for any families where both parents work or you have a single parent. Most people do not have 2.5 weeks of vacation to use for that option, and finding child care for a short duration like that is a real burden on many households with young children.

For Draft 1, what is the purpose of starting school so early? It's still summer and it only gets the students out a week or so earlier than they do now!

I don't understand the rationale behind switching to an earlier start for the school year. There was NO explanation presented for this idea. The increased cost of having to blast the air conditioners in the schools during the hottest part of the year would seemingly be quite high. Summer programs are not available to offer coverage in MAY for children who use them. The impact of ending & starting school earlier impacts sports since the schools in our district are not on the same proposed schedule. What is gained? Bands with summer camps would now have to hold them in JULY. This makes no sense! Students don't need 2+ weeks off at Christmas just to lose the momentum for achievement heading into the final weeks of the semester.

The heat in Charlottesville makes it really unrealistic to start school, and allow any outdoor break time whatsoever. Has the district calculated the cost of airconditioning in August?

During early August there are too many vacations, weddings, family reunions, etc. to travel and to have children resume classes. It would be such an inconvenience to some families specifically my family. Thanks for allowing my input.

Pushing the school year to start any earlier is not a good idea. Please do not start it any earlier.

I feel that the "traditional" closer to labor day opening is the best fit for both students, faculty and staff and allows valuable time to be spent with families in a traditional summer vacation format.

I like the current schedule, we ALWAYS go on vacation the first or second week in August, which would mean our 3 children would miss those first few days of school. We also like the fact of starting mid week for adjustment purposes. Hope this gets heard and taken into consideration.

The first two are not feasible for us, and it doesn't make sense to us to end school so early.....the only one that looks good is the draft 2 or 3.

Would rather have kids attend school in June than in August. Why don't they move the SOL tests to later in the school year?

In order to coordinate as many academic and summer calendars as possible, I view the August 22nd start date (traditional calendar) as the best choice. I understand that another calendar may push mid-year exams before Xmas break, giving students an advantage of information retainage for test-taking, but I don't believe that opinion over-rides the advantages of coordinating other activities with family, summer employment or camps, etc. The week of Xmas break also gives time to those students who need it to study for their finals.

I don't see the need to start schools so early in August especially since Albemarle county students are in class for more hours than required. In addition, drafts 2 & 3 schedules work better for parents that also work for Albemarle County Schools that are not teachers.

Our kids still have friends in other school systems who start the traditional day after Labor Day. August 8th is just ridiculous. It cuts their summer vacation in half and messes up lots of families' vacation plans. Let our kids have a proper summer vacation.

Summer opportunities are greatly curtailed by earlier start dates. Extremely hot weather is not compatible with school activities and studies. These items are not affected by getting out of school later in the spring.

late start to allow families to enjoy summer and enjoy complete family since college siblings are home until end of Aug

I am strongly against starting school back in early August. I think it is a bad idea to have students traveling on buses and waiting at bus stops in the heat of the summer. This also cuts into family vacation time and summer activities.

Actually, I'd prefer Draft 4; the schedule we currently follow.

Please DO NOT allow for an early August start date. This makes it very difficult to plan for camps/day care as well as vacation planning. Starting before Labor Day is early enough, but to start in early August just does not make sense. That is just too early to go back to school.

Starting in early August makes finding day care/camps very difficult. It also severely limits vacation options.

I think they already start school too early. Growing up in NYC, we started school in September and had all of August OFF.

I believe the earlier start dismissal dates are best for students.

People need time to be able to get their children what they need for this upcoming school year. August 8th as a start date restricts the time for preparation and our time with our kids.

I like the early start date in order to get the high school taking exams before Christmas break. I do not like that spring break has been moved in all calendars to March. Many surrounding schools moved their spring break to the first full week in April to match the Albemarle calendar. I work in another county and would have to pull my students out of school for a week to go on vacation.... What is the reasoning behind moving the spring break? I work in Fluvanna and we have an early starting date and spring break in April. It works.

Will you be able to sustain the elimination of a week of vacation over the December break from year to year? Getting out of school in May makes it hard on working parents.

Since the kids get out mid June on the 2011-2012 calendar, we can't expect them to turn around & go back to school at the beginning of August for the 2012-2013 calendar year. If the ultimate goal is to be done by the end of May, then we need to back it up one week per year for a couple of years.

Why don't we start after labor day like very other school system and end in May like every other school system?! Being a former teacher, I feel that some of these professional days are a waste of time. Teachers do not need 2-3 days to do report cards. From my past experiences, Teachers that are good do not need a lot more training. Most of this is done through their college degrees.

August 8th is just too early. Please consider having school on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, eliminating teacher workdays, and shortening Christmas break.

How does this impact when fall sport practices start? They currently start in August, a couple weeks ahead of the start of school. If you go with the earlier start date, do practices and the season overall get pushed up? If so, I think that's problematic for kids who participate in other sports during the summer. For example, if a child plays a summer sport through July, would the earlier start date create a conflict with that summer sport and practices for the school fall sport?

Aug 8 is not even an option!!!! Please do not start school that early. Draft #3 is the only one I wanted to vote for. OPTION #3 please!!!!

Perhaps we could move to draft one type calendar year in 2013-2014. That way it gives us time to "get used" to a new schedule, moving closer to "year round" school.

The biggest negative to early start times is the loss of summer work time and fall sport tryouts. If an early start time is chosen, will fall sports not begin any early. Will you not let practice or tryouts start before school?

Please consider social impacts of these 3 problematic schedules. We vote none of the above. A shorter Christmas break or one ending mid-week does not allow two weeklong blocks for choice of travel time. Parents who work with other parents can take only one of the two holiday weeks. Two full weeks including weekends allow families and children to maintain important connections with grandparents. Synchronizing the county schools with the city schools allows swim clubs, camps, and sport teams to function with both children from city and county. Fragmenting these social connections by having children start summer break early or end late creates havoc in important summer experiences. Karen and Peter Ham

Build some snow make-up days into the calendar EARLIER in the year. We always play this game of "chicken" at the end of the year about the last day of school.....it will be announced that it is one day, then as we get closer to year's end, you count up hours and finish on the original last day anyway. Make-up those days, and give parents, staff and students some assurances about when the last day will be. Also, it seems there is little or no emphasis on end of the school year time for teachers to have professional days to wrap up and review the year, meet with one another on student/teaching issues, and plan, while things are still fresh on the mind. I know folks are tired, but they can do these things if the expectation is there.

please do not shorten the summer! Keep August 22!

School starts too early as it is. Please do not start before the third week of August. Preferably school would start after labor day and end the first week of June.

We are on vacation the week on August 8th. We like draft 2 because it proposes more time off at Christmas than Draft 3.

I think 1/2 days are a waste of time. Students and teachers don't expect/do much, but 8 August is too early. I would re-work Draft 2, ditching the 1/2 days (making some days off and some full days) and extending the year one more week in May.

For those of us in retail business, losing a week of winter break makes it difficult to travel to see family. I like the idea of summer break beginning in late May, when the weather is more pleasant than in August. Are the county schools prepared for inside play/recess, during the HOT month of August? The length of time given for recess is already shockingly brief. Kids need more time for exercise/play. Perhaps, the schools can plan field trips to local water parks, pools and float/tube the James River in August.

Horrible idea. Keep dates exactly the way they are. Stating early will wreak havoc with vacations and sports.

Not sure why or how this change will benefit the students or community.

An earlier start allows for completion of the first semester before Christmas break and aligns well with what other counties in the area are doing

I like getting out earlier, but not starting too terribly early. I also like having a decent winter break. Calendar 3 causes us to lose some winter break time. I like the shorter length of Professional Learning Days at the beginning of the year, but not at the cost of starting very early.

A lot of children play sports in the summer such as All Star Baseball and it runs into the first part of August and a lot of mini vacations are planned in August right before going back to school and starting earlier in August will mess this up and more importantly its still summer time for the most part and that is what the kids look forward to by starting summer earlier doesn't matter really. I think it has always worked fine like it was and there is no real reason to change it. Thank you

My children will miss the first week or 2 of school if the start date is pushed back. Please do not cut into the summer vacation!

I don't think it should be changed unless they want to go back to starting after Labor Day

Option 1 is terrible for working parents. The holiday break is too long. Option 2 is marginally better. Summer camps will not be fully staffed in early/ mid-May since many rely on college students on summer break.

Many families have their summer schedules arranged in advance. I prefer to have my children out later into the month of August since that is when we travel as a family. Our work schedules are not that flexible. Also with needing college students to provide child care getting out too early will complicate that.

I like the shorter Christmas and Spring Breaks. It is harder to get the kids back in the routine after a long extended break.

In my opinion changing the entire dynamic of summer is a bad thing. When I was in school the year did not start until after labor day and we survived. Please do not do anything you will regret.

Summer should go through most of August

I like having the two weeks off at Xmas. It allows us to visit family that does not live in the area.

I don't understand the push to have school end in May and start in mid-August. Why not start the week before Labor Day and end by the 10th of June? What is gained by making this move?

August 8 is way too early for a start date, and ending in May is a bad idea, too. The kids should go from late August to mid-June. On another note, I don't care if your spelling curriculum comes from UVA and has data to back it--the kids' spelling still sucks. And why is it that our rising 6th grader has no clue what the parts of speech are? What have you been doing all year? The school day--at least for elementary kids--needs to be a little longer. The last week of school for elementary school kids is nothing more than state-funded day care. Make them actually learn something instead of stupid field days and class parties. And quit giving certificates and prizes to kids just for showing up. Geez.

Exams/Second Quarter/First Semester need to end before winter break! Winter break can be longer--resume on January 7, and to compensate for two added days, make March 15 and May 17 full days of school, with the last day of school on Wednesday May 22.

I am not sure 2.5 weeks off at Christmas is the best. However as a teacher in the division I like the teacher workdays spread out throughout the calendar.

Starting earlier would be consistant with other schools that start a few weeks earlier than Albemarle County. I would like to see more activities, camps and programs (that parents can afford) for students while they are out of school for the summer. Maybe have the school year extended with more or longer breaks during the year.

Why are there so many half days in the schedule? Would the after school program at each school be in place when there is a half day or only the program at Cale? For working parents, half days are quite challenging, especially if the after school program at your school is not running. Would the Albemarle schools still match the Charlottesville schools' schedule or would they be different?

We are working parents, so when you factor in the number of days we would need sitter coverage (during the year, and over the summer), Draft 1 makes the most sense. I do not like the tacking on of teacher workshop days to Spring Break and/or Winter Break, however. It seems that most of the calendars are created by people with families where one parent is either extremely flexible or stays/works from home. Very frustrating!

I feel that half days are a waste of time. The last two weeks of school tend to be a waste of time, once the exams are done, many teachers are done teaching. I have graduated an Honors student from MHS and have one at MHS. While there is not an ideal way to please all. I feel that none of the calendars are wonderful. I would suggest some rational to go along with them and then they might be more appealing, but trying to guess what the intentions are is a waste of time.

I prefer a shorter Winter Holiday than the two weeks. I also prefer having school end earlier than mid-June.

I am from England and my son has cousins in that school system. The only break they get for the summer is August. How about keeping school open a little longer through June and pushing back the exam dates for SOLs and such?

Aug 8 seems to early to start back to school. Let the children have their summer break. Plus, a lot of camps don't start until later in June and this leaves a lot of parents scrambling for childcare once school is over.

I'm a parent and also work in the schools and I like the 3rd draft starting August 22 way better than beginning school earlier in August. I've shown my rising 7th and 11 Grade children the 3 drafts and they feel the same way I do. It's so hot in August, so humid, it's not conducive to learning at all. Thank you for taking the time to consider my opinion.

Aug. 8th is too early for kids to start school. We consider that part of our summer and often have travel plans during the month.

I think the early start dates for these calendars are taking the "teaching-to-the-test-syndrome" too far. Starting school ten days before Labor Day, is too early! We need to rethink spending our time pushing rote memorization and teaching our kids how to think creative and become lifelong learners. Board members need to think outside the box, too. Instead of a session in Feb to change the calendar, they should be questioning the test and why the state can't administer the test in late May!!!!

I think that Draft 1 is COMPLETELY unacceptable!! The thought of losing August for vacation and gaining May makes no sense, particularly given how hot it is in August. The only acceptable Drafts in my opinion are 2 and 3, in that order. I prefer the later start and end dates of Draft 3. But the reason I ranked Draft 2 first is because I like the idea of ending a grading period right before the December/January break rather than having the kids take exams after that break. I can live with Draft 2 or 3, but again, Draft 1 is just a really, really awful idea!

would like to see 1/2 days before holidays on all calendars.

Could you alter #2 by making winter break two full weeks, moving spring break forward one week by putting the days from Jan (2,3 and 4) as the first three days of that week (March 18,19,20) make the 21 a half day instead of the 15 and make the 21 the final day of the nine weeks and have the 22 as a professional development day (taken from Jan2). It seems then you could move final semester to being just one week longer (end on the 24 instead of the 17) and still have a week in May for make-ups if needed for weather.

Draft 3 is the only plan that's even acceptable. For one thing, the first two start dates are absurdly early; the kicker is that both of the first two plans ignore Easter Week. I would have thought you might have heard enough about that this year. I heard it from a LOT of other parents who, like us, were very unhappy with no time off for Easter. You should have heard it, too.

Like the early start of August 13, however, I am not liking that they have to go back to school on the 3rd of January; maybe January 7 will be better.

From an athletic point of view, the school has the potential of losing lots of money with anything other than Draft 1. But I'm sure money (or athletics) is not a factor in trying to change the start and end date of the school year. Your decision is made and our input means very little.

I like that the grading periods align with the holidays on the first two drafts. Draft 1 just looks like a very solid schedule without a lot of half days which tend to be not as productive in practical terms.

Summer is too short when we start school in early August

I do not like spring break so early, as it will interfere with college spring breaks. I hope teachers get to leave on the half days when kids leave before holidays, especially before Thanksgiving. I would still prefer a whole day off for kids before Thanksgiving.

Children in the Marching Band start that camp 2 and a half weeks prior to school starting. With an Aug. 8th start, they would be starting camp sometime in mid-July. This makes any summer employment almost impossible for band members and virtually ruins the summer.

1. I prefer Spring Break in April when the weather is more consistently nicer. 2. Winter break seems too short in both draft 2 and 3. 3. In draft 3 it seems to make more sense to end school by 5/24 - with the 27th being a holiday, little if any productive work just wouldn't happen those last 3 days of school. 4. The county should consider year round school with a 45 days on, 15 days off. 5. Thanks for seeking community input!

Draft 2 seems to be the compromise. Draft 1 has long vacations which might be difficult for parents who work and have elementary children. Draft 3 gets the hot Aug weather, and most likely - school into June as it is now. Draft 2 is early, but saves a couple of days w/use of 1/2 days and still will allow school to dismiss by Memorial Day. Great for summer vacations and college prep.

We have always had an August vacation. We as parents have also felt that with the heat of Aug the buses are extremely hot with no air condition. Very unhealthy with the fumes especially in the back of the bus.

It is nice that students can have 2 full weeks at Christmas to visit and celebrate with their families

I think changing beginning and ending school dates would benefit people who are from out of state when trying to visit relatives where the school year ends and starts sooner. I don't see where extending Christmas break benefits anyone considering Our Christmas break is the norm for public schools. At least the schools I know of in several other states. Thanks, Mother of four

Starting the school year in early August is absolutely CRAZY!!!! Who ever thought of such an idea should be fired!!!

I prefer to see the kids off for 2 full weeks over Christmas/Winter Break. I suggest on Draft 3 have them go a full day 12/21 3/21 & 3/22 and then give them off 1/2, 1/3 & 1/4. And have last day 5/31 instead of 5/30.

If education is ACPS's primary business, why continue to spend resources on work that upsets students/families with constant sytematic changes? Please state the end-game agenda in a transparent & specific manner to the public. 1/2 days are disruptive for students/teachers/families so why are any put into the calendars (except the one with the earliest start date)? Is there an attempt to generate specific survey results that match the agenda of ACPS staff? Will year round school proposal be next? ACPS tries to control and waste more student time and energy every yr. Students need downtime & time to absorb & apply thoughts/concepts/ideas. This is the basis for allowing creativity which is often born out of boredom so please stop micromanaging

I think a Aug 8 start date is way too soon and it is not worth the expense to aircondition the buildings.

The early schedule has more holidays and more impact on working parents who have to find childcare options (EDEP not always available). In addition, the early end to the school year will make it more difficult to find summer childcare - typically I use college students who may or may not be home in the middle of May.

The reason I ranked Draft 3 lowest was because it breaks a grading period over the Christmas holiday. I think that a two week break in the middle of a grading period slows the learning process.

as a parent with 2 children in the ACPS system I find it a travesty to even consider any earluer date then 8/22 start. In today's hectic world spending quality time with family is very difficult. Taking away summer family time is ridiculous. In my opinion the schools currently waste many educational days as is. Once the kids finish SOL testing at the end of school they seem to do nothing educational or worthwhile. Why they would need to go earlier in auguts just to waste more days makes no sense.

There are few options for childcare when students get out of school in May. Most summer camps do not start that early. Having spring break in March is not optimal as that is when most colleges are having spring break. Not a family friendly time to take a vacation to the beach. Also spring break is better when it approaches Easter when a majority of families are traveling to spend time with family. Starting earlier in August is not the direction that the schools should be going to. If you wish to attempt to start school earlier in the summer, at least only change it minimally. Starting August 8 is just too early. This will prohibit the kids from participating in some summer activities that they would otherwise have available

Half days are not productive in the classrooms and create logistical difficulties for parents.

I cannot understand why alb co schools need so much more time that the local private institutions. We spend more money and more time and get lower results. I STRONGLY oppose making school start any earlier that the current dates of latter August. I would support efficiency experts to evaluate ways to shorten the academic year and improve our outcomes

Starting too early in in August interferes with a lot of vacation plans. Also 2 weeks for Christmas break is a burden for people who have to pay for child care.

Reduce class sizes and stop school bullying

It looks like a combination of calendars one and two would be least disruptive for our area. Could you use the first semester dates on calendar 1 and adjust with the second semester dates of calendar two by moving spring break forward an week and therefore adding the days back that two full weeks at winter break takes from third quarter. Then you can just add a week at the end of fourth quarter and still end by the end of May. This seems most workable.

Maybe teachers could incorporate their Professional Days during the holiday times the students are out. This would decrease the amount of time students are out and assist parents in having to take off from work longer.

Are you insane? Aug 8th. You want to do this for your beloved Sol's. Give me a break. Why don't you spend more time on the students then on the tests. August is not a month for school, it is the summer for gods sake. Who comes up with these ridiculous ideas? My kids are in overnight camp through the second week in August. Start school on the 8th and they won't be there. What is wrong with the school year the way it is? It's summer....leave it that way!!!!

Draft 2 seems to be the best of the three options b/c it starts mid-August, still has a full Spring Break, but cuts the Winter Break down (which seems to be too long anyway; the kids get bored, it's hard for parents to take that much vacation and/or find babysitting), and it ends in May. Ending in mid-late May is wonderful because then it leaves the whole of June for fun summer activities before it gets too hot. I also like starting the school year earlier in August (but not too early; draft 1 is too early a start, I think) because they'll have a few weeks to get into it before the Labor Day holiday. It always has seemed odd that the kids would go just a week and then get a day off. I think Draft 2 is a great option.

This would be the same as other schools they still have the same amount of days off.... If they start earlier then they get out earlier.

I do not like the idea of my child starting school in the hottest part of the summer that is why I do not want to see it start earlier in August that it is now. We also have a child in College and it would make it difficult to get that child back to school with our other child starting so early in August.

With a child that plays sports - if the school year starts earlier in the month of August that would then make them need to start practicing in July that is too early. We also have a child in college and the early start date of the beginning of August would make it difficult to get them back to school if I have one that needs to attend school and can not travel to bring the other one to college.

I think anything before August 22nd is too soon to bring the kids back, my daughter has summer school this year for the whole month of July we are not planning trips until August- the 13th is my birthday and is around the time we are planning on taking trips. I feel it is unfair for the children to have to return to school so soon. I personally feel it should not be until after Labor Day in September like it was when I was in school [High School 1998 graduated]. They need time off and time to enjoy the summer. Thank you.

please don't have the kids going to school when it's 100 degrees the first week in August and will be near that the whole month. BAD IDEA !

I think that starting before Aug 22 would not work for a lot of people. We don't take or vacation until the first or second week in August because those are the weeks every year that we get off. I have talked to a couple of families in the same boat as me.

I feel that students should have two weeks off for Winter Break. However, I did not vote for Option 1, which offered that, because I feel that August 8th is just too early to start school. Really, none of the three options fit what I want-a mid to late August start with two weeks over Winter Break.

It is completely off the mark to consider starting school in early to mid August. Though I realize that administrators would like children to take exams before Christmas break, many schools have similar semester schedules and continue to have the exams after break and things work out just fine. Perhaps learning can be enhanced not by ruining vacation and camp plans but by hiring and maintaining quality teachers, not paying for hard to understand math programs like "Investigations" and dropping the hugely unpopular (with parents at least...) SOL program.

Any of the three end dates are fine (May 17, May 24, May 30). Either Aug 13 or Aug 22 start dates are fine. Aug 8 seems like too early a start date. That said, a feature of the Aug8 draft calendar that is VERY desirable is the longer winter break (resuming Jan 9). We would very much like an additional week for winter break! Is it possible to "merge" two of the proposed calendars, to have an Aug 13 start date, a longer winter break, and an end of May 30? Something like this would by far be our FIRST choice, but it wasn't one of the draft options.

2 1/2 weeks for Christmas holiday is too long. We would rather have more long weekends, than such a long break.

The August 8 start date is completely out of synchrony with the academic community. University faculty are away during August, and faculty who remain for summer wrap up at the end of July and use the first few weeks of August for family vacation. Re: August 13 start, completing the school year well before Memorial Day is unclear and seems very wasteful of potentially valuable learning time. The August 22 start is preferred for dually employed families. Please do not use early dismissal days as a regular part of the calendar. This creates unnecessary family stress for working parents. Educationally, what can you possibly accomplish during a half-day?

The earlier start dates present a nightmare for childcare for elem school aged kids during the longer breaks.

What is the obsession with starting school earlier and earlier? More school in August means fouled-up family summer plans, increased cost for cooling the schools during the hottest part of summer, less focused students, and more negative consequences. The longer break kids have over Christmas/New Year's, the more they'll forget and the less ready they will be to "hit the ground running" when school begins again in January. If you want to add a day or two extra then or at Thanksgiving, there is certainly room to add those days at the end of the year since all options end in May! Honestly, these calendars are all baffling to me, because I just do not see the benefit of pushing the start date earlier. Given these choices, I must choose #3

For working parents, summer breaks need to coincide with available camp schedules. Area camps may respond to Albe. School changes, but these camps also need maximum census to stay in business. Camps draw from the City and other area Counties. Let's keep the school year within area norms to make sure child care is readily available for working parents & our area youth, as well as the valuable summer jobs created for older teens (which is in short supply). Lastly, let's support families by allowing summer break to be during summer. This time of year is when families traditionally plan time together, like evenings at parks after work, during the longer days. Let's not further limit family time by stealing those summer days.

Beginning Aug 8th is too early to begin back. We have a family reunion that occurs each year from July 31-Aug 7. Also, there is no need for a full two week break during Christmas & New Years. Most have to go back to work by January 2nd. My opinion is that the Aug 13th or Aug 22nd are much better schedules.

I do not agree with my child going back to school in early August or the middle of August. Most families do not take vacations until August. June, July and August are the summer months and it should remain that way.

Aug. 8th & the 13th are too early for the students to return to school. It's still summer and families are still taking summer vacations in Aug.

I do not like any of these options. Many states are opting for year-round schooling to address the problem of retaining learned material. These options appear to cram as many days into the shortest amount of calendar time possible. I'm not seeing how this benefits the students. I do see how these options benefit the district's challenge of funding the academic school year. Money over academic retention does not equate.

August 8 is too early and two and 1/2 week break for Christmas is nuts!!! No one needs to be off that long....makes it too hard for working parents.

the more than two week break on the proposed Aug. 8 start dates is foolish. Having the kids off that long makes the startup process that much more difficult once they return.

The August 8th start date is entirely too early and takes away from the actual summer months plus the Christmas holiday is entirely too long. For full time working parents, making child care arrangements is difficult as well as the children become restless and their brains tend to turn to "mush" after so much time out of school. I feel the 8/13 is ideal with shortened Christmas break, out of school earlier (to correspond more with parents who may also be taking college courses and allows more family time). Thank you for considering parents needs and requests.

I vehemently oppose starting school prior to August 22, 2012. A start date of August 8 or 13 is not acceptable.

Draft 1 has way too much time off at Xmas

I like the idea of the longer winter break. I'm not sure why the Monday before election day can't be a day off? If the school board adopts this schedule, extreme consideration should be used when deciding whether or not to extend the upcoming school year into the summer for snow days. Let's be sensible and use those BANKED HOURS--every last one of them before we shorten an already shortened summer break. Everyone needs a break to come back refreshed!

Calendars that start earlier in August and allow more holiday time in December/January present a financial hardship on working parents who would be forced to find child care for the extended winter holiday. At least during the summer, there are affordable summer camps and other options for working parents. Drafts 1 and 2 also put great pressure on families by allowing little more than two months of summer holiday to compete for vacation opportunities when costs already are driven high by demand. The notion that students will retain information better for two months than for three is dubious at best. This would be a change for the convenience of administrators with no tangible benefit to students that presents a hardship to working parents.

What is the reasoning behind the schedule change? Choices may be different if we understood why the School Board wants to make the changes. My only suggestion is regarding the Nov 6 Holiday. Families go out of town on those 4 day weekends - I think attendance will be very low on Nov 5th - best to keep that a 4 day weekend.

Option 3 is absolutely terrible for working parents.

It would be ideal if the schedule could coordinate more closely with UVA's spring break -- draft 1 and 2 come closer.

My number one choice would be a year round schedule.

Half days appear to be cost prohibitive for operating buses and the heating and air conditioning of the school. Would consider making these full days instead. How would athletics be handled in late May or early June if students have graduated but must be in attendance at school in order to play. Would a student have to be at school with nothing to do in order to qualify to play.

Start day too big a jump for one year. Should be done incrementally over 2-3 year span. Don't like 1/2 days (work scheds/ daycare). Bias appears to be ending in May, why? Option 2 has a long Winter Break, why not take a few of those days to delay the start date? Look for consistent breaks, long stretches without breaks are no good.

What is the rationale for starting school the beginning of August? Draft 1: Positive - longer breaks like the European system, Negative: Starts in early August Draft 2: Positive - starts 2 days later; Negatives - Starting on Monday is very tiring for all concerned, the breaks are cut shorter, but the end of year the same. Draft 3: Positive: Starts later in August, Negative - shorter breaks. I'd rather have more frequent and longer breaks spread throughout the term. Students need this time to rest

Starting and Ending days of the school year are not a factor; however, half days are a waste of resources as it increases the number of days that the busses need to run. Why have 2 half days with the busses running 4 trips when you can have 1 full day with the busses 2 trips. Furthermore, half days provide very little educational value when the kids get there and know they are just waiting to leave by lunch time. Also, I am not in this situation, but I would assume that those who rely on after school daycare are not too fond of making special arrangements for half days. From a purely financial and educational standpoint, I would prefer no half days during the school year.

I would prefer to start school during the last 10 days of August, have a 2 week break in December, and have school end the first week of June.

The first semester needs to end before Christmas break.

For families with two working families, the option with a full summer and a small winter break makes the most sense. Unfortunately, having to come up with alternative child care is a huge problem for many.

I believe having first day on a Weds is preferred, especially by teachers and kindergarteners. Having 2nd quarter end before Christmas is very important, especially for high school kids and teachers taking semester courses. Draft #1, that has 19 days off for Christmas -- this is way too long for Christmas break. Ending on May 17 would be nice, but ending on May 24 would be just as nice, too. Ending on May 24 would possibly allow for 4-day weekends in January and February. Having Spring Break immediately after end of 3rd quarter is good. 9 days is enough for Spring Break, the tenth day doesn't add that much. Is there a committee that works on these Calendars/ Does it have any openings? Mark Mincer mincer@cstone.net

I do not like the early start for school but this is the only option which preserves the 3 days at Thanksgiving and 2 full weeks at Christmas. For those of us who have family out of state, those days off give us opportunities that we will lose if the shorter vacations are used. I am also not completely sure why such a drastic change must be made--the other schedule has worked for many years. Students are used to having exams at the end of January--

most summer camps do not start until June

I, as I am sure many others, am not pleased with the early start date BUT I feel it is vitally important to honor those families who travel over vacations and the need for them to have a full day before Thanksgiving and two weeks at Christmas. I do like to see that teacher's workdays are clustered--that make it much easier to schedule baby sitters instead of a day here and a day there.

I think the early start stinks for next year. I do need the extra days in November and December to travel and be with family so I think Draft 1 is the best.

I do not like the early start proposed for August of 2012 BUT I also don't like the shortened vacations of the other 2 plans. It would make it extremely difficult for my family to travel to be with family. So I think Draft 1 is the best.

In my opinion the half days are a waste of time for students and disruptive, but I understand the need for teacher development. Inservice days make more sense. Starting school early in August is my least favorite option. Thank you!

Did you not consider that you actually have working parents? Christmas break lasting through the 1st week of JANUARY?! What do working parents do with their kids?! Also, did you not take into consideration the economic issues created by you for businesses that depend on the summer income from camps to keep their businesses running? Did you not also take into consideration the cost of running buses earlier in August? GAS PRICES with AIR CONDITIONING? What do you hope to accomplish by killing the summer?!

I do not see any benefit of having Early Dismissal days. I do not believe this limited amount of time in school provides enough educational structure to be beneficial for the students. Teachers no sooner get things moving in the classroom and then it is time for dismissal. The cost to bus and pay all staff for such a short day seems to be a waste of money. Let's be as productive as we can be with the time our students are in the school building.

I would much rather start late in August and run later in June. It is blazing hot in August, much more than it is in June.

Children and families should have two weeks off during the Christmas / winter holidays to travel and spend time with family!

There are many summer activities in August, camps and family vacations. Most summer activities in the northern US and Canada occur in August when the weather is the nicest. Families with relatives in these locales may miss out on yearly family events if school is pushed earlier in August. John Hall (3 children in Albemarle County schools)

One thought is the length of the Winter Break of Draft 1 is long adding to the requirement of single parents having to put kids in camps for days the parent doesn't have vacation time.

I like the later start in August. It is simply too hot and humid for much learning to occur, and the air conditioning costs will be too costly. I also like getting out early in June. The only thing you should consider is using Jan 21 & 22, Feb 18, and Mar 21 as possible make up days. Thank you for listening to the community.

As a parent I think that the summer break would be too short with a start date at the beginning of August. I understand the desire for the high schools to put in a full semester including exams prior to the winter break, but that is the only positive I can see for starting that early. From the athletic standpoint, I don't think the fall sports like football would want to begin practice in July which they would have to do with a early August start date. Another consideration would be summer camps and child care. Summer camps are a major financial benefit for some of the area businesses and their season would be shortened by starting too early.

I like the later start date in Aug and the quarters seem to be pretty equal in the third option

8/8 WAY too early to start; too long for winter break (would rather have more days in August) 8/13 still early to start; half days before breaks are pointless; would like two full weeks for winter break; needs Oct. break instead of getting out quite so early at year's end 8/22 would like two full weeks for winter break; no half-days before breaks

A 3 week break over Christmas would put enormous strain on working parents...daycare/camp options are minimal. An early May end date might be out of sync with camp availability.

I feel that the late August start date is best. Starting/Ending the school year earlier will not be in sync with other summer activities such as camps, jobs, summer classes, sports.

We strongly prefer an option that gives a full two weeks over December break. We feel that Draft 2 start date is much better than an August 8th start date (too early) but would like to see the December break extended through the first week in January and the year end date extended by a few days since we do not need to end before the end of May. We strongly prefer the earlier March break in Drafts 1 & 2

It would have been helpful to understand the School Board's reasoning for modifying the current calendar. Why wasn't that provided as background information? It would also have been helpful if you could have provided some pros and cons associated with the various options.....I am assuming that each calendar has been vetted by the staff some degree.....that should have been provided. And lastly, why isn't the current calendar proposed as an option? Although I am open to change, with no justification provided, my preference is clearly to maintain the existing calendar. I do not support any of the three options.....my vote is to retain the existing calendar.

Losing August is NOT a good idea..... the kids need a good amount of time out of school..... and it always seems TOO EARLY as it is. The only choice for me is Draft #3.

I think kids should go to school year around and get off two or three weeks @ the end of each nine weeks.

I think it will be hard for high schoolers to get summer jobs if they can't work after 8/7. It is still so hot in early August.

Given the hot climate in Virginia, I think starting school in early-mid August is a mistake. Starting after Labor Day would be preferable, but the current calendar has been a reasonable compromise in the start date. Since the current calendar isn't listed as an option, the next best would be Draft 3. No reason was given for considering an earlier start date, but I assume it is an attempt to improve test scores by testing before the winter break. In actuality, the January tests likely provide a truer picture of the learning that has taken place. If a change is really needed (and I'm not sure that it is) it would be better to move the start date later and have more time in January to prepare students for the tests.

I would like to try the Aug. 8 start. I do have kids at all levels of the school system from elementary to high school, so that probably makes me more accepting of the earlier start than the parents that I know who only have elementary age children and feel that they are accomodating other people's children. It also looks preferable to me that there are no early dismissals on the Aug. 8 schedule - I think sometimes it's better just to have a regular school day and easier on working parents to have the kids either in school or out. I do think parents will need to think about how this affects their summer vacation/camp plans but we will have enough time to work that out. Basically, it just shifts the year - I don't see that as a big deal.

Cut superfluous bullying, "green", multicultural/diversity, etc non academic time-wasting programs, upgrade teacher/student academics, and start school end of august/after the labor day holiday.

School should start mid August (draft 2) and get out late May (draft 1 and 3). If you could give Draft 2 a few more days at the Christmas holiday that would push the end date for Draft 2 making it a start date of 8/13 and a last date around 5/24. You could even give the teachers another learning day as I see Draft 2 does not have as many Teacher Prof days as Drafts 1 and 3. I have elementary school aged children and have not been exposed to when quarter's should end (SOL etc). I hesitate to comment as I am not schooled on high school aged schedules. We should have 2 weeks for Christmas, a week for Spring Break. Professional Learning Days should coincide with Holidays We should start mid August and end late May. We need another option.

Since rumor has it that a decision has already been made to have an Aug. 8th start date, why even put a survey out? I suspect a lot of turnover on the school board after this fiasco. An Aug. 8th start date is horrible for working parents that depend on camps for child care during the summer.

Is it because of requirements that school can no longer start after Labor day and end before Memorial day? I would speculate that it would be less disruptive and make families happier to have longer school days and a shorter school year.

August 8th is way to early to return to school. It is still at the height of the summer vacations and would negatively impact camp and family time which is often coordinated with people in other regions that get out later and start later than we do in Albemarle. I can see no reasonable explanation to want to start that early. There is no benefit to parents who would then have to cover longer vacation days scheduled and they still would get out of school at end of May. The August 22 start seems much more reasonable and the August 13th is even plausible but anything much earlier seems unreasonable.

I like the idea of the half days which provides flexibility for families. I do think that teachers, especially at the elementary level, need to have at least 5 days to prepare before students come which is one of the reasons I dislike the first option. You need to consider the amount released time that high school teachers have had as compared to elementary teachers. These are teachers who have less planning and more involved report cards. But yet they have had less released time to work unlike high school and middle teachers who have half days at the end of the semesters. There is more flexibility being built in for families to travel which helps count down on the number of students who end up leaving early on days before holidays.

The early start would have a very negative impact on our family.

Suggested Changes to optimize Draft 2: Make Nov. 21 a full day of vacation instead of a half day, and extend Winter Break so that the first day back is January 7 (Longer breaks interrupt epidemics and allow the kids to recover and regain their enthusiasm). In order to gain the necessary days for the above schedule changes, end the school year on May 23 with a half day, and move the final Professional Learning Day from May 21 to May 24 . This schedule would provide the best of all worlds: Longer breaks; more teacher time at the beginning of the year and the end of quarters when it is most needed; and the opportunity to add 5 snow days while still finishing in May.

I am deeply disappointed to see the seeming obsession with getting out of school earlier, to the point of cutting back on MUCH NEEDED winter breaks!!! For the many families who have to travel long distances to celebrate holidays, a two week winter break is essential. As parents we are asked to try to not plan trips during the school year, but this is going to be increasingly difficult if the winter break is shortened. Also, having lived in other states that have experimented with early start/finish dates, and then returned to a more "traditional" calendar, I hope that ACPS will avoid all of the upheaval that this brings about in a community. Hasn't the stress due to the 4 by 4 class schedule been enough upheaval for a while???

I tried to only rank Draft 3. So change my rank of Draft 2 to 100 and my rank of Draft 1 to about 1000 - I think that they are both horrible.

Half days are very hard on working parents. Why not keep whole days and finish the year earlier? Starting back on Jan. 3 is nice for those who travel.

Many families that live in Albemarle County are not originally from the area. Thus, summer is a time that extended family get together. Starting early in August will prevent this from happening. Also, I am against the idea of beginning school so early only to accomodate testing and projects for high schoolers.

Far too much time off at Christmas on draft 1, working parents would have a hard time finding child care as there is nothing in place structural camp wise and you can't just hope that something will come together. Far far too early, for what purpose? And to shorten the previous summer far too much.

Please do not start school before Aug 22nd, Draft 3 is the best choice. Thank you.

We take an annual vacation to a festival the first week in August. The schedule that is set right now is the best as anything else upsets set vacations and the children's court ordered visitation with their dad.

Draft 1, with the August 8 start, will be very difficult for many families. The 2.5 week holiday break in December and January would be challenging for families with working parents, and August 8 is just way too early to start school. Albemarle County would be so different from other districts that families and children would miss many opportunities for summer activities that are scheduled based on the majority of school schedules.

The most important thing that differentiates Albemarle from Northern Virginia is the pleasure of having the two week holiday break over Christmas and the New Year. Why does only option one preserve that tradition and options two and three truncate the time off? Starting Aug 8 is not appropriate so the 13th or 22nd is preferred assuming the holiday period can be preserved.

Please don't start any earlier than we are starting now!!!!

Do I like starting school the first week in August--NO. Do I like 3 days in November for Thanksgiving--most definitely. Do I like 2 weeks for Christmas--excuse me, winter break--YES!!! If these days are not available to me and my family, we will not be able to join other family members who live out of town--that is important to me and my families--

I prefer a shorter summer break with more lengthy breaks within the school year such as the two-week winter break in draft 1.

I really like the idea of finishing the 2nd quarter before the Christmas holidays. Option 1 seems like a little too early of a start, so option 2 seems best.

Thank you for making Spring Break earlier! Now we won't have to miss school to take a ski vacation.

Although I understand that Draft 1 and Draft 2 place the mid-way of the school year before the winter break, the breaks cause undue difficulties on a two - parent working household and activities planned with extended families over the summer - the only time that a child can maintain a good relationship with relatives and cousins who have different schedules.

The x-mas break is way too long in #1. The earlier spring break is good.

I think the 1/2 days are a waste of time. Very little learning happens on those days, and they are difficult for working parents. I also think 2 and 1/2 weeks for a winter break is too long in Draft 2. Lastly, adding snow make up days to the end of the year does not add to learning. Those need to happen within the school year. Thank you for chance to give input.

Why has Spring break moved away from the first full week in April? I thought the decision was made to keep it the same week each year. Two and a half weeks seems too long for a winter break. While wrapping up the semester before winter break would be great, starting early August is not a good trade. The bus rides would be too hot.

Draft 1 is absolutely terrible.

Day preceding Thanksgiving should be full day off to provide families time to travel.

COULD YOU NOT COMBINE #1 AND #2, START ON AUG 13(#2) BUT GET OUT ON MAY 24(#1) AND ADD BACK IN THE 2 DAY BREAKS IN OCT, NOV (M/T, VOTING DAY), JAN (MLK DAY AND TUES) OR FEB (PRES. DAY AND TUES). IT IS NICE TO HAVE A SHORT BREAK TO PLAN TO VISIT RELATIVES OR TRIPS TO DC/OTHER LOCAL EXCURSIONS. WHAT ABOUT 1/2 DAY ON THURS FOR TEACHERS WORKDAY AND OFF FRI.

Our family prefers keeping spring break the first full week in April regardless of which draft is decided upon.

Why even give the kids summer break at all?! What is the point & meaning of all this?

If the most important reason to move the start date of school back is to be able to finish the semester before the Christmas/Winter Break, there are ways to get more instructional days AND start at a more reasonable time of year. There are many, many professional days and extra days off for students (see extra days around voting day), which can be eliminated. There are numerous schools in Virginia which are able to accomplish beginning school on a reasonable date, and get exams finished before Christmas/Winter Break. Having the school year begin in what is still considered summer, does not allow for a healthy learning environment. It is too hot for the children to be outside for recess or for PE.

Please consider making the K-5 day longer. I think adding one and half to two hours would improve the learning experience.

If start so soon will really impact all of August vacation time. Better to wait.

2 week Christmas break is important!

I think that it is important to end the grading period before the long holiday breaks.

The kids should have most of August off. My elem. age kids only had 5 days of instruction after SOLs this year and that was just fine. There is more to school than emphasis on testing. They could be engaged in small projects for the remaining school year.

shortening 'summer' to correspond to SOL tests seems ridiculous to me. Use the month of June to teach all those things having nothing to do with testing and let your teachers creativity shine. Then start school after Labor Day like my children's cousins do so family time can be maximized.

I think a 2 week break in the winter is important. It allows families to take holiday trips. I think you will see an increase in children missing the first few days after winter break if it is only a week long.

School should be starting after Labor Day this is ridiculous and you are ruining summer.

The start date on calendar one is a little early, but it is nice to get 2 full weeks off at Christmas.

Please consider a year-round calendar. Students lose too much ground with such a huge amount of time off during the summer. Spreading out the time off will keep them fresh and provide time off during non "peak" travel seasons. Many places have successfully instituted a year round calendar.

The proposal to begin school for students does not appear to have any clear pedagogical purpose. First and foremost, that is why it should be rejected. Second, starting school that early will be a safety hazard with students travelling in the heat. Third, starting school that early can only lead to increased operating expenses. Fourth, students who play on travel sports teams will be penalized because most teams and clubs have set their training camp schedules around the present school calendar. Fifth, cutting the summer short can only further degrade teach morale and motivation with piling on having to teach hot, tired students in addition to being forced to teach to a standardized test.

For parents who work this schedule of starting later and getting out earlier presents a huge challenge.

I hate the idea of an August 8 or 13 start! School is stressful enough for these kids and basically eliminating one month of summer makes summer break almost impossible. In fact, I would vote for a Labor Day to Memorial Day school year if that were an option. If kids need more time in school, how about increasing the length of the school day? Wouldn't that be more friendly to working parents than the system we have now which makes it almost impossible for a working parent to do a 9:00 to 5:00 work shift? Even if "instructional" learning time ended where it does now, we could increase gym or extracurricular activities to fill the rest of the day.

It was very disappointing to not be presented with the ACSB's reasonings behind each of the drafts proposed. In order to conduct my rankings of choice, I had to make assumptions which may or may not be the same as the school boards. I can say that I like the idea of completing a semester BEFORE a major break, so time is not wasted reviewing/re-teaching old materials and it is fresh in the student's mind. This way, they can really relax over their scheduled breaks.

It is hard enough going back to school before Labor Day. I would like to see the rationale for starting August 8? Is it because of testing? Front-loading the curriculum? Has testing become more important than LEARNING? I am not thrilled with the almost three weeks of winter break in Draft 3. With the probable inclement weather days, there is the potential for many more days off in the winter. I'd much rather have those vacation days at home or in a pool when it is 100 degrees outside in August. Perhaps those who create the calendar should ride on an unairconditioned bus for an hour in rural Albemarle County for a few afternoons before making a decision.

I would like to understand why the changes are proposed. Please make that information more available. What are the benefits, and to whom?

I HATE the idea of having the kids go even earlier in the summer than they already do!!!! Please do not change it so that they have to go earlier in the summer!

I'm happy with the current schedule, and I see no need to change it. Also, unless the City schools are going to make the same change, no change should be made...the two schedules should be the same, so camps, afterschool care, vacations, child care, etc. can be easily scheduled and coordinated.

Though it is not a problem for our family, I think that an increased number of early dismissal days is unfair to families where both parents work and special child care arrangements would have to be made. I also feel that having the semester end before Winterbreak would help boost grades because there would be no break in the continuity of learning prior to exams.

If you make the start date any earlier than 8/22, my children will not be able to work a summer job. Part of good development for our youth is not just a good education (which they are already getting the way the calendar is now), but their understanding of the responsibilities of working a summer job. PLEASE STOP trying to change so many things about Albemarle County schools. This county has one of the best school systems in the state and you keep trying to mess with it. I was born and raised here and graduated from AHS in 1987. I am unhappy with the calendar change. Part of my high school development was working a summer job. Do not take that away from my kids!

Please explore the idea of year round school with 3 week breaks during each semester. Summer is such waste, and the first month of the school year is spent in reviewing the previous year!

The balance of semesters, and break schedules appears to be the best for both parents and teaches in Draft 1.

My only hope is that you really listen to what the public says and are not asking people without really considering their answers.

Positive changes: having spring break coincide with the end of 3rd nine weeks, adding early dismissal days. Shorter winter break in #3 allows middle/high exams to be given in Jan. after return from break. Negatives: Starting school Aug 8 or 13 is too much of a tradeoff for completing 1st semester before winter break. Winter break too long in #1. Also, with #1 or #2 many high school athletes competing in spring sports would be playing after last day of school. In my opinion, #1 and #2 should be scrapped as options.

8/8 is too early and the xmas break is too long. I think the 13th is a good compromise to time the SOL testing May with summer dismissal. Plus, as a summer swimming family, the 8th pushes the pool season into May and the conditions and water can be quite chilly. thanks for all of your hard work on this. --Brad Heilman (Brownsville)

On calendar 1 the lengthy break at Christmas is going to be an extreme hardship for working parents. It is often difficult enough to make arrangements for kids during that time, without adding additional days. My employer allows no prolonged time off between Dec. 10 and Jan. 10 each year. I understand that making arrangements is my responsibility but a lengthy break is not needed in my opinion.

I simply cannot understand how ANYONE could possibly suggest Aug 8 -- you are REALLY out of touch with your "audience". even suggesting this as a possibility seriously damages your credibility

stick with aug 22

DRAFT 2 is top choice for the following reasons: I like greater uninterrupted instructional time at beginning of school year. Also like getting first two nine weeks completed PRIOR to Christmas break. However, would prefer it even MORE if... spring break one week later and end of classes 24th of May versus 17th.

Could increase number of days off during the Christmas holidays in drafts 2 and 3 as it was suggested in draft 1.

Please do not begin school the first week of August!!!! It is way too hot and lots of families are still vacationing in August. We don't need our children to be out of school the beginning of May when it is still cool here in Virginia. The summer is the end of June, July and August!!!

My family always takes vacation mid-August because of swim team obligations in June/July. School already starts before Labor Day, and that is early enough!!! We are not interested in early/mid August start dates!!!

It would be very difficult for students to end a grading period AFTER the Christmas holiday because they have mid-terms and end-of-grading-period tests. Drafts 1 and 2 allow them to finish tests before their vacation, allowing them to perform better and to enjoy their breaks without having to worry about studying.

Christmas break doesn't need to be so long! What purpose does starting in early August serve? If anything the school year should begin after Labor Day and end the second week of June.

When I was in school we went to school after Labor Day and got out June 10th and had no issues. I am not sure how we have gotten to where we go back before Labor Day and out later than when I went to school. I think we need to go back and re-look at the old calendars. I think we need to go back as late in August as possible because of the heat and the kids coming home on hot busses during the hottest part of the day. I think a lot of people feel the same way. I think getting out the first week in June or the last week in May is great if we start in the last week of August. I understand a lot of thought goes into these calendars and understand the frustration it must be changing them. Thanks for all you do!

Summer is for childhood and this special time should never be shortchanged. There are recess issues for elementary school children as afternoon recess in August is not appropriate for them on hot metal equipment, in playgrounds without shade, and without appropriate sunblock and sunglasses. Air conditioning expenses for such little return. Parents will miss out on the tax free school supplies weekend. High school students are affected by summer jobs and community college classes and internship. Summer camp opportunities are limited for students. We should not rush to change the calendar. I know many parents who still do not know this discussion is occurring as most people don't check the district web site unless a notice is sent home

Draft one has too many days where the students will be out of school. If anything the school year needs to be lengthened.

Draft 2 & 3 add up to 177.5 days (if counting half days as half and not whole) and Draft 1 = 180 student days. I know that 1/2 day is considered full day but I feel that there should be no half days unless inclement weather or final exams (ie: middle & HS students). There should be a full day off before Thanksgiving for those who travel. My recent HS graduate says it is a bad idea to have second 9 weeks end after winter break. Why go to school on Nov. 5 and be off Nov. 6? Could the Dec.21 Prof. day be placed on Nov. 5 and the students go to school on Dec.21?

Starting the first week in Aug. will limit opportunities for rising seniors to work, attend sports camps, and have vacations with families. My son is in several AP classes and has found as research has indicated that an A/B schedule is much more successful for students then an 4 X 4. County administrators rushed into the 4 X 4 schedule due to budget constraints. Provide for the public how many students in each high school are taking semester classes as opposed to full year classes. Are you changing the semester break for the majority of students or minority? Think of our community, families, and the rest of education schedules throughout the state prior to this decision.

My husband and I are working parents and it is difficult to find childcare for our children during extended breaks. I prefer a longer summer break as there is more continuity. Thank you.

I think the school board is being extremely short sighted in it's consideration of "cutting summer short." Not everything in life is learned in a classroom!

I would like more information about why the change to the school calendar is being sought by the School Board. I am vehemently opposed to Draft 2, dislike draft 1, and am ambivalent about draft 3. What does the change in the calendar accomplish? I would appreciate having more information to make an educated statement. I can be reached at rwkaczka@comcast.net. Thank you for your time and attention. Sincerely, Robin W. Kaczka

Please consider the working parents who have saved all summer for a vacation that is already booked. I've always been happy with ACHS calendars, which most closely resemble option 3.

Option 3 makes the best sense. Option 1 would be a nightmare for working parents. Option 2 would be only marginally better.

The first two dates are awful for households where both parents work, especially draft 1. In draft 1, there is a more than two week break at Christmas and school is out in mid-May -- well before any camps have started. Is the county prepared to offer childcare if this option is chosen?

Draft 1 is just not possible for working parents.

Local summer camps (start and stop dates) will, and must play an important role in this decisions since a large percentage of parents work.

Our system is set up for an extended summer break. For working parents, camps and summer program options are abundant. For stay at home parents, there are lovingly adored traditions of spending time at the pool together or catching fireflies or covering the entire driveway in sidewalk chalk. It isn't just about the summer time fun; it is about the break that is earned after a nine months of hard work during the school year. Option 1 will rob our children of these traditions, not to mention create new challenges for working parents with the extended winter break and additional days off. Option 2 would be a nice compromise but the number of half days would create additional challenges for working parents. I vote for Option 3!

It only makes sense to make such drastic changes if the first semester ends before the Christmas holiday break. Draft 1 puts the school system almost in line with a college schedule.

Our family's strong preference is for the first semester to end prior to winter break. We also hope you can coordinate the calendar with Charlottesville City Schools.

Have five children, four will be attending Hollymead Elem. Do NOT like an early August start. Takes away almost an entire month of summer. For those that participate in swim team, August is the only month we have to do other activities and vacations. What happened to starting after Labor Day??? It really makes no sense to start school and then have a holiday a week and a half later!

This option most closely aligns to an appropriate SOL schedule for students. Have wenthought about year round schooling? The positives heavily outweigh the negatives. Make Albemarle County Schools even stronger...

It is very difficult for households where both parents have jobs outside the home to to arrange for long stretches of child care during the hollidays!

Both options 1 and 2 would place an enormous burden on working parents. Also, the extra long holiday break would mean a difficulty transition in January for many students.

You are very inconsistent with the logic surrounding the earlier start date. We are not running a college and the semester does not need to end in December. If knowledge will run out of our students heads over the winter break, how can we expect them to endure the long gaps created by the 4x4 schedule. If we are not teaching to and stressing about SOL's, why to we need the kids to take them in December. You are creating a schism in the community by breaking parity with the calendar used by the City of Charlottesville. You will also cause unexpected problems with the majority of the remainder of our state which starts AFTER Labor Day. Please retain the latest start date possible!!!

Starting the 8th or 13th cuts into prime vacation time for families. It is also still very hot and decreases out door swimming and outdoor sport time for the kids.

Early August start is objectionable for many reasons. Early August is the hottest month of the year, which would be miserable for the students to be in school. I can't imagine the expense of running the AC at comfortable levels for the month of August and September. I can imagine they would not benefit from PE classess or sports activities outdoors either. I think the heat would limit safe participation in outdoor sports and activites that students normally safely enjoy in the cooler months.

Has the cost to start school earlier been taken into consideration. We already have a strained budget and now you want to make it rise. Teachers, TA's, Buses, Fuel, drivers, air conditioning, free breakfasts and lunches, and lets not forget extra office staff , nurses, janitors, extra maintenance on the buildings. From the look of things, I really don't think all of these issues have been looked over very well. Leave the school year as it is. Summer is the time most families can go on vacation together. How does this benefit the students and their families? Thank you, Mr. Lemley

Important to end 1st semester before Winter Break; 12 days off for Winter Break too long; what's the point of half days?; prefer school beginning on a Wednesday; important to be off that Wednesday before Thanksgiving; I would most prefer Draft 2 but with modifications -- without half days, with first day moved to W15 and no school on W21Nov

For those of us with younger children who have not yet started SOLs or any testing, I would like to understand the rational behind the proposed calendars.

Make Wednesday Nov. 21 a whole day off of school for travel, as you will have parents pulling their kids out for a half day.

Build in snow days

Starting after Labor day and ending after Memorial day.

Students should go back early,I just wish this could of happen earlier for my older children!

Please make this change!

There is no need for Spring Break! Instead, Christmas break should be longer. I say that every year but nobody ever listens! I'm sure more parents feel the same way!!!

The August 8th calendar seems the most balanced. I also like that it has no early dismissal days which are too hectic.

Thank your asking for our input .

I am highly oppossed to our children going back to school at the beginning of August. We take family vacations/reunions in August. We have other family members from other parts of the state who are on the school schedule we have now, and this is the only time we can all get together. Our children play tennis and swim during the summer, while we are at work during June and July-August is the only down time we have. Please do not spoil it! The two week vacation over Christmas is far too long-and it is a difficult time to take long family vacations-one week is enough. Longer vacations during that time will put an undue burden on working parents.

I don't know when you are going to pick the option and make it be "in stone" BUT there are some people who pick / choose their vacation months in advance .In my case I choose in November of this year for next year . When 3 of use who have the same job heard off a " chance " that this sort of change was going to happen . this year ..we had to choose vacation weeks earlier than normal to avoid picking a vacation week that would then be a school week for our kids. I'm sure us three and others like us are a small minority BUT IF you could settle / make this pick ASAP just so people like us and really everyone could get our vacations in line Thank You. P.S. CELL PHONE BLOCKERS IN THE SCHOOLS WOULD BE A BLESSING,CELL PHONES, STOP THEM NOW !!!

Spring break to fall Easter week is best.

This is a huge matter for working parents: options 1 and 2 would require me to find another job.

Draft 1 provides to much time off during the winter. Kids need more time off during the summer months.

August 8 stalyrt is not good for many families who have children in the summer swim program as that season goes to the end of July; also complicated to end early in may for dual working families that rely on college students for summer babysitting; currently summer camps do not begin till June, ACPS would need to work with camps for this, summer pools rely on hiring teen age life guards. Has an August 13 (or that week) start with a May 24 end been considered? it also seems to me you will ultimatly end up varying the xmas holiday schedule depending on when 12/24 or 1/1 falls, can't imagine if 1/1 is a Thursday you would pull all the kids back for a Friday start etc

You should have allowed everyone to pick one of the three. Because of this, I would predict that Draft #2 will be the most popular because those who want an early start pick Draft 1 first and Draft 3 last. Those who want a late start pick Draft 3 first and Draft 1 last. Both of these groups will pick Draft 2 as second. Perhaps you will only select the one which got the most first place votes rather than weighting the results.

Why don't you consider creating an option to have school start after Labor Day and have the end of the year extend into the end of June. From others that I have talked to, I think this would get a lot of interest.

As a working parent, I like option 3, but I will say that I don't care for the number of early dismissals on the schedule. They are very disruptive for working parents, and I have a hard time believing that much instruction of value occurs on half-days. Ideally I'd like to see #3 with fewer (or no) half days, the last day of school before Memorial Day (I believe that the 2.5 days after will be completely wasted, instructionally), and 3 full days off for Thanksgiving. Option 1 - 2 weeks, 3 days is way too long for holiday break. Way too long. Option 2 - lots of half days, very early summer start, very early spring release. I worry that college students who staff the camps that working parents depend on wouldn't yet be available.

Why do we even have to start so early in Aug? Other schooling systems start in Sept? With my 1st ranked calendar, we still get out on summer break a week earlier than this year. Why couldn't we keep our existing calendar?

I appreciate the later starting date ... the others seem to cut Summer plans short.

You are asking people to vote without giving them the rationale behind each calendar. I am not sure how valid this survey will be. Option 2, with the wide variance in the quarter lengths, needs work

We like the longer summers with a later start date in Aug.

I feel that the long winter break in Draft #1 is much too long and would favor a slightly longer summer break

This schedule coincides with other family schedules and summer activities.

I am unclear about the reasons for starting school even earlier in August and DO NOT SUPPORT AN EARLIER START! Switching to an earlier start interferes with vacations to visit family in other states and early June trips are out of the question as cousins in the northeast are in school until mid June. Area swim teams and camps would also be impacted by schedule changes. Furthermore, I am concerned with the timeline in all 3 calendars. Placing spring break at the end of March means that there are no days off from school from April until the end of school. As a parent and a former teacher, I can attest that a teacher workday to break up the long 7-8 week stretch would be welcome and NECESSARY! "IF IT AIN'T BROKE DON'T FIX IT!"

Please stay away from the half days - it makes it very difficult to find back-up, part-time childcare when you are a parent that works outside the home.

I'm a working mom and the dad in this HH works as well...so Draft #3 is our least favorite as due to half days, it would be hard to make sure the kids are cared for. I prefer the draft as similar in yrs past.

Please do not start until Aug 22. You would be cutting into many family plans and opportunities.

Very good plan in every draft to end the school year shortly after SOLs. Be sure to allow time for end-of-year field trips after testing is completed. Would be ideal if the semester could end before the end of the calendar year without compromising the month of August.

Since we are committed to starting prior to labor day, it makes sense to go ahead and even up the semesters with a break in between with options one or two. Further, teachers would have more time on both these options to prepare students for the AP exams. If we are not planning to make the semesters even, let's go back to starting after Labor Day.

None.

LIKE #2 BECAUSE IT STARTS A LITTLE LATER BUT OUT EARLIER #1 NEXT BECAUSE IT HAS A LONG WINTER BREAK #3 I DONT LIKE AT ALL BECAUSE RETURNING ON THE 2ND OF JAN MAKES IT HARD FOR TRAVELING

August 8th & 13th start dates compress the summer too much. Families enjoy having the opportunity to be involved in water activities & vacations during this warmest part of the year. A later start date (August 22) helps keep kids out of the high heat riding or waiting for the bus.

Like the days off with Draft 2. Worried about heat and children getting sick on the buses more. Heat stroke is also possible with children and I don't want one of my grandchildren in that situation or anyone else's child. If those buses break down there is no air to help cool them. With the budget cuts there are MORE CHILDREN ON THE BUSES this creates MORE heat and then in the hottest part of the summer on top of that is not a good combination. Would YOU want to ride the buses then? We need to go back to fewer students on the buses if any of these are passed. What happens to starting after Labor Day and getting out by the first week of June?

Should not HAVE to rank. Ignore the ranking above. As a parent & employee, I prefer the 2011-12 calendar and none of the 3 suggested. I and others agree that the school should not start earlier in August. Students and staff are participating in activities, classes, camps, vacations, as they have for years early in August. Often August is hotter than June and we would expect increased cooling costs. Many buses are not air conditioned. Many students use the break in December to prepare for exams. They would feel more pressure to be ready for exams in December. Many staff/students would not get a break next summer. School can be stressful, not having a break/vacation would increase feelings of stress in 2012-13. No need for more stress at this time.

Survey Title: 2012-13 Calendar Development Survey
Report Type: Conditional
Start Date: 30-Jun-11
End Date: 11-Jul-11
Completed Responses: 2840
Filtered Responses: 157

Conditions Applied

Q1. What is your relationship to Albemarle County Public Schools? is **Student**

Q2. Please rank the three draft calendars in order of your preference, with "Rank 1" being your first choice, and "Rank 3" being your third choice.			
Responses	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start	22	17	118
Draft 2 - Aug. 13 Start	46	106	5
Draft 3 - Aug. 22 Start	89	34	34
Total Responses	157		

Q3. Other input or considerations:
start at the 22nd there is no point of starting school early august students won't be checked in
august 8th way tooooooo early i need to make money in the summer to pay for post highschool education
It is too hot in August to attend school and the winter break is too long in the first calendar.
My family takes the first two weeks of August for our vacation. Getting out in May doesn't even feel like summer.
It is more convenient that the semester ends before christmas break, and that the shcool year ends early june
Draft 3 allows me to continue attending my summer camp that I have attended the past 6 years.
Assigning the start date for the school year to early August can potentially lead to conflicts in scheduling between camps, summer trips, college visits among others.
I like getting out of school in May and having exams before christmas holiday.
Start school late August like the 22nd and spring break left the first whole week of April. Winter Break is fine how it is & last day of school should be in June. You don't want to make there be 9 whole weeks of school after spring break like in Draft 1!!
Our summer is short enough as it is. It doesn't need to be even shorter. Before this year, your schedule was working well - but this year; it is worse than ever before. Please do not start school on August 8th

Our summer is short enough as it is. It does not require more shortening. Before this year, the schedule was working perfectly. Now, it's going crazy. Switching back to the schedule from several years ago makes the most sense.

I think each year from now on we should start earlier and have spring break either the last week in March or the third week in March. I love these new drafts. I do think we should have more than 1 1/2 weeks of break around Christmas.

I go to camp every year in the first two weeks of August and all of August we see our family in Washington state. Having school start so early and ending at the same time would increase my stress level greatly. I work very hard in school but I need that break of summer to look forward to. It is especially ridiculous in my opinion that the school term would end at roughly the same time it does now when we start around August 20th. I would miss a lot of school if this change was made to start earlier. Under no circumstances should you ever move school starting earlier than August 20th.

I don't want this short of a summer.

half days are dumb. would rather have a late start and longer winter break.

Many people, like myself, may have already scheduled trips before August 22.

I think that starting school in August would be a mistake. I work hard during the school year, and feel that starting in August, even if we got out earlier, would give me less of a break. I also think that starting that early would take away the "summer" part of the vacation and make it more of a spring/summer vacation. Again, I think that starting in late August is the best choice for the school to make.

stop getting rid of my summer

Summer should be for break, not school.

With the 9 week grading periods ending just before winter and spring, Draft 2 is much better. Draft 2 does the same, but cuts into August too much.

Weather is too hot in August for PE or other outdoor activities.

Although beginning the school year earlier may allow students to finish earlier in May, I do not see many other advantages to beginning so early. Also, I feel that winter break should still be two weeks long as it has been in the past.

I like a two week Winter break and a later start and going longer into June.

I like starting later in August. I don't mind continuing into June. I like a two week Winter break.

There are too many half days.

As a student, it is very detrimental to our summer vacation to start the 8th of August. Summer is a time to relax, and recharge our mental batteries for the upcoming school year. Starting the 8th means that we only have two months, which impacts on time for camps, summer homework, and relaxation time. The 13th is better, but only slightly. It is, in a sense, the lesser of two evils. Starting the 22nd is preferred, as it is very similar to the original calendar. The calendar is good as it is, and it is unclear on why it is trying to be changed.

I am a rising junior at WAHS. My summer canoe camp in Canada does not end until August 8th. If you started school earlier than the 3rd week I wouldn't have any time to participate in band camp or pre-season cross country training before classes begin. Please keep option #3 as the start date. Thanks.

I am a rising 8th grader at HMS. I am a swimmer and we don't finish the JSLs until the end of July. My family takes vacation in August and then I have to do preseason soccer camp. It would not work for me to start school earlier than the third week in August. Please keep it the same.

I don't like going to school that early BUT I do want to see my grandparents for Thanksgiving vacation and Christmas and if you use 2 or 3, my family won't have time to get there. That would make me sad.

I don't like school starting the beginning of August because that summer will be short. But after that, we would get out in May so that would be nice. I like Number 1 because it keeps vacations long enough. My family lives all over and we need to travel to get together. Thanks you for asking me.

Draft 2, but with a longer winter break. Make up for it by ending school later in May.

KEEP THE LONGER WINTER BREAK. YOU CAN DO THIS BY HAVING SCHOOL END A WEEK LATER IN MAY.

Option 2 is better, but make X-mas break longer!

We should also have middle school football :)

Seriously?!

I believe that school should just start at the end of August and get out in early June. The first two drafts gives students no time for real summer. Camps and other things are usually are going on in mid July to the beginning of August. I believe it makes an impact on people's summer by crunching in vacations and other summer activites even though it is the same amount of summer. I think Draft 3 is the best.

I would like spring break in april

Spring break should be in April

Half days prior to T. giving break is useless, airlines leave from c.vill in the am. Close the schools entirely that day. Where are the built in snow days or rain flooding days. Don't put these at the end of the year and try to trick us by extending the school year. What you have to do is look at the min. provided per day, then do a calendar not based on 180 days but on Min!!!!. Do not provide teachers with during year days to attend conferences, this year there were weeks in January/Feb/March that my 6th grader at SMS had a sub every day for weeks because teachers were going to training. Dismiss the MS at SMS at 3:45 align the AHS and SMS schedules so that students can access programs at the HS. Also before you do this get AC for AHS!!!

All of these are not good choices. I prefer to keep the current schedule, like last year. The proposed three options will mess up fall sports schedules.

Please don't start school before the end of August! I like to go on vacation with my family that month and next year we have a big trip planned to visit cousins in KS and CA and then go to HI with my family. Don't ruin it for us!!!

Draft 2 starts school earlier but not too early and ends the 2nd nine weeks before winter break.

I guess plan 1 would be best. I like to see my family over vacations and we need the time to travel. After this year it would be good to get out of school in May so I have a better chance of getting a summer job.

Spring break should be in April We should take naps during the day

Survey Title: 2012-13 Calendar Development Survey
Report Type: Conditional
Start Date: 30-Jun-11
End Date: 11-Jul-11
Completed Responses: 2840
Filtered Responses: 596

Conditions Applied

Q1. What is your relationship to Albemarle County Public Schools? is **Employee**

Q2. Please rank the three draft calendars in order of your preference, with "Rank 1" being your first choice, and "Rank 3" being your third choice.			
Responses	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start	181	86	329
Draft 2 - Aug. 13 Start	268	119	209
Draft 3 - Aug. 22 Start	147	391	58
Total Responses	596		

Q3. Other input or considerations:

Having an early August start probably will not increase productive time on task for the students. As a teacher with over 20 years of experience I have seen students not being able to keep focus during the hot weather. When they have P.E. or recess they over heat and when they return to the classrooms it takes longer to cool down, calm down, and then focus on the lesson being taught. It seems like a small thing but it really does add up to a lot of non productive time.

This meets the needs of the students better in my opinion and could possibly produce some energy savings if the schools could not be forced to cool the buildings into the June months except for minimal staff.

I don't mind the start or end dates for draft two and three, but cutting our 2 week break is tough for those who use that time to travel.

While, I like the first option for the start and end date, I feel as though teachers need more time before school starts to get things ready for the year. I also value the 2 full weeks at winter break. It is a much needed break that helps me recharge and get ready for the rest of the school year.

It has never made sense to split up the 2nd quarter with the holiday break.

It looks as though the third calendar was designed cutting vacations as much as possible so that it is not chosen. The reason for the vacation cuts appears to be because school ends in May rather than June. I'm not sure why the schools can't end in June like most schools in the country do. We have made a big deal about ending the semester before winter break and I am not sure that's really so important especially if we are not having the high schools exclusively on a 4x4. I think that Draft one would be very difficult to implement that first year because with summer school, kids would get no vacation time at all.

I am curious as to why we want to start earlier. If it's because of the SOL window, it does give us more time. But if we are thinking "green" it is a lot hotter in August than it is in June. The buildings were hot in June, I dread August.

I feel that the 2nd and 3rd drafts do not take into consideration those that travel at holidays. Also, coming from a university town (Athens, GA) before Charlottesville, having spring break near the university is not always a good thing. Starting school earlier in August is also asking students to come back during the hottest part of the summer. Lastly, getting out May 17th is incredibly too early. If we are thinking about the kids, most of the neighborhood pools have not even opened at this time.

Thank you for asking our opinion. As a parent of a soon to be high schooler I realize there is some benefit ending the first semester prior to Winter Break; however, it is not enough of a benefit to offset what I think would be several problems: 1. Students and teachers would still be in a summer mental mode due summer daylight hours in August. 2. School starting at the beginning of August makes it more difficult scheduling vacations and enrolling kids in summer camp. Additionally, the early start interferes with summer travel sports. ... Travel Softball, Travel baseball, All-Star teams, etc 3. Personally, my classroom is not air conditioned. On balance, I think it will cause more problems than it would alleviate.

It would be great if there were days in which teachers had the full day to work in their classrooms for grading, PLC meetings, conferencing with parents, etc. Often times the Professional Development Days and Teacher Workdays do not work that way - unless our understanding of these days are incorrect. Why don't we go back to building Snow Days into our calendar as has been done in the past where the first 2 or 3 days are just forgiven? That worked well and was easier than trying to keep up with the make-up days in order as placed on a calendar. This would help with planning, assessments, etc.

The extra day at Thanksgiving is very important to those of us whose immediate families don't live in the Charlottesville area. The rest of the calendar changes matter much less to me than that one day.

2 weeks for the winter holiday is important to me. Half days are difficult for many parents who don't have childcare for their younger children. Also many parents will "blow off" the half days before holidays to leave early for vacations.

Many students participate in summer sports. Often, this means that any family trips must be taken in August once sports have completed. I think Draft 1 would cause scheduling frustrations for a lot of our families.

What is the reason for this desire to change? You have not explained WHY you wish to change the calendar. The current start time and 2-week winter break work just fine. There is no option here to compare, which I find very disappointing. You owe your staff and families an explanation -- something you should have realized.

Way too many Prof devel days in #3.

As a HS teacher, I am begging you to please consider calendar 1 as our final pick. It makes sense for the new schedule we have adopted this past school year - it allows for the proper amount of time to accommodate the 4x4 schedule. Other school systems that have been/are on the 4x4 have mentioned that it is imperative to have an early August start and exams before the break to help alleviate SOL/exam stress.

Please put spring break after Good Friday and Easter instead of before. Many children are absent the week following Easter due to families traveling to celebrate with love ones outside of our area.

Half days are a waste of time. When we had these years ago, office staff and teachers spent quite a bit of time making sure students got to the right place--there's always confusion. Two weeks at Christmas is important. Spring Break is better later not in March. I prefer the later start date (Draft 3) but the half days and holidays are the worst. Draft 1 provides the best holiday schedule other than spring break but it is too early to start.

To me, Draft 1 seems the least desirable by far. If we are going to move to something like a year-round schedule, that's fine, but this option gives a very long Holiday Break (and I think that our current one is too long), but no significant break after the First Quarter. All three finish before Memorial Day, which I like. I believe that this early finish date will also please many families and employers. It also saves the County significant money in HVAC costs, before the weather becomes very hot.

Many families are still on vacation in early August. Drafts 1 & 2 start dates are just too early!

I would rather not have so many half days, they end up being wasted. It's difficult to accomplish much on a half day and many students end up taking the whole day. As an employee I do not feel that my feedback is ever valued which is making me want to stop taking these surveys.

3 needs to go...that isn't much different than what we have now...if we go with 2 that is not as drastic as 1 and then we can put 1 into affect the following year

Thanks for seeking input! Very much appreciated. The shortening of summer will interfere with essential PD done outside of the school year. Less teachers will pursue those opportunities with less time off. I'm also concerned about a potential loss of time spent with family. During the school year, so much of my time is consumed by being the absolute best teacher I can be. The summer is my opportunity to attend PD opportunities at a slower more digestible pace, that allows me to spend more quality time with family and going on a vacation. For most teachers, summer is when we are able to catch up on various personal appointments. Please publicize the rationale for this possible change.

An explanation of why an earlier start date is being considered would be extremely helpful to understanding this process.

I would like to see a combination of Draft 1 and 2. Start on 8/13, 2 weeks at Christmas, and last day of school on the 24th or the last week of May. I do not like the half days for prof. dev. It is too hard on parents of young children (my son just graduated last year from MHS) I like a staff day to work on report cards at the end of each grading period. I like spring break being the third week of March, too. Draft 3 is basically what we have now which puts the end of course testing in January which I assume is what we want to fix.

As a teacher, I do not like the construction of draft #1 -- so many professional development days on fridays before major breaks. i don't see that as valuable professional time. and the winter break is too long w/ draft #1. as an AP teacher, i want to maximize instruction before the early may AP testing window.

Shortening the summer break while continuing to build in multiple teacher work days during the year does not afford teachers (or families) the opportunity to take well-deserved breaks or to visit family living at a distance. Teachers do not have the flexibility that other professions have to take vacations or visit family during the school year. Please take into account the "captive" nature of education and avoid stretching into the summer break, which is the only opportunity that many teachers have to recharge, take summer classes, and have life experiences that reflects directly on what teachers can bring to educating students (such as summer fellowships, language immersion trips, or leading groups of students to Europe or Latin America

Being out of step with other localities (as in the two proposed earlier starts) would create challenges for students and parents trying to plan any non-school activities. For teachers earlier starts would limit professional opportunities, esp. coursework.

I would prefer drafts to all have the same length of winter break so I could rankings can be compared for start time in an isolated fashion.

Children need their summers to run, play, swim, and make memories. I teach fifth grade and have noticed for several years that neither parents, nor students, take school seriously until after Labor Day. Trying to foster homework "buy-in" and participation when the local pools are open is incredibly difficult. Nightly reading assignments are viewed as torture when the alternative is a dip in the cool waters to stave off 90 degree (+) heat. A later start is my personal favorite.

The entire school body of Albemarle County should not be punished because the high school wanted to change their schedule. How difficult is it to end the semester mid January. High school students should be able to retain information for 2 weeks over winter break.

Finishing the first semester before winter break is a plus....but starting on a Wednesday is good too. As a teacher and parent...starting Aug 8 just seems hard to swallow... to early! Whatever you decide we will adapt.

I really like the early dismissal. The first short summer of 2012 will be tough, but I like the schedules that involve ending in May.

I like the idea of school ending in May after SOL's. As a teaching assistant for 8 years (elementary) and a parent of two high school children I observe that not a lot of teaching and learning happens the last 2 weeks after the SOL's. I do not want to start school as early as Aug 8, but Aug 13 still seems reasonable. I dont mind winter break being a bit shorter.

I like the start of Draft 2 with students starting on the 13th. Winter break 1/2 day on 21st. off 24th - 4th. Spring break the last week of March work professional days around as needed. With a shortened summer is staff expected to participate in week long professional development that is offered in the summer?

We need to have that two week break at Christmas (oh, excuse me, winter break). I really don't understand why we would go back to school early in August to get out mid May. Why??

Having spring break in March does not benefit the children. Spring break works best in April, especially when we are assessing our children and trying to help them do their best with end of the quarter assessments. Also, why are the winter breaks getting short if we are not starting sooner? That does not seem logical.

Something to consider: teachers will effectively be working 2 extra weeks for the calendar year under draft 1. " This 2 weeks will not be "made up" until a teacher retires. The board should consider additional compensation for the 2 additional weeks worked during the calendar year.

Many of us must put down retainer fees on our vacation rentals one year in advance...hope this decision will be made by August 1st if there is a change. CATEC and UVA start later in the year, so for students involved in dual enrollment or a CATEC program, it certainly makes sense to start later so they can remain close to the city of Charlottesville's schedule with their students. I have talked with various sources in the city and they have already made the decision not to change their start date. I think it would be easiest on everyone if the county followed suit. You can easily make data support any of these dates, so I don't believe there is any reputable data to support student achievement with one date over the other.

I do not like the early dismissal days. They are very hard on parents (finding child care for a half day), staff (especially the cafeteria and office staff) and have no real educational value at the elementary level.

Early dismissals tend to throw students off - it is never a normal day, and often becomes sort of a wasted day academically because everything is cut short. I noticed there were a lot of them in Draft 2 & 3.

We NEED two weeks at Christmas time. We have to travel to see family and we're already exhausted. Two weeks is a requirement. Can't live very well without it. The rest of the calendars are fine, except for that. I don't really see the benefit, however, at starting earlier. What difference does it make? How does it help anything? Let's make a REAL change and do away with seat time, going to year round school and letting kids graduate as soon as they earn their 24 credits, testing out with an advanced pass wherever they can and mostly finishing up with high school by the time they're sixteen. Let's send most of them to PVCC or UVA for their 17th and 18th years. And let's get that funded by some wealthy people in this area.

It makes sense to end school right after AP exams and SOL's because those tests have become the driving force behind our education, which may be why are schools are so uninspiring. But if we change the schedule to acknowledge that there is no point of school after these exams, we have totally given up on making school relevant. So deeply sad.

I feel that Memorial Day should be a holiday on all three options.

I do not like draft one or two. I work another job in summer and would not have any time off at all. I do not want to start school in beg. of August!

I would like to keep 2 weeks of Winter Holiday if at all possible.

School systems like Chesapeake and Virginia Beach start school AFTER Labor Day and end school 1 week after Albemarle County. They don't have as many teacher work days built in. I like that!!!

As a teacher, it's a huge improvement to have the semester end in December. This allows students to have exams close the semester as opposed to exams now being in December and the semester end 3 weeks later. I also appreciate a work day at the end of each nine weeks. This allows teachers to compile & grade student work in a timely manner. I would like to see 2-3 more teacher work days before the start of the school year. I work in special ed & this is only time to plan with content teachers. As both teacher and parent I think it's critical to have sufficient time off at the holidays. It is very important to most people I know to have a full three days off at Thanksgiving; more flexibility seems to be available during the Winter break.

As both a parent and a teacher in Albemarle, I would love to see the kids go back to school a little earlier and finish right after testing.

I think people enjoy having the Wed. before Thanksgiving off b/c so many folks travel. Starting so early in Aug. does present some challenges for schools getting all the paperwork ready for the opening of school. We do enjoy having 2 weeks for winter break!! I prefer option/calendar one!!

As a classroom teacher, it is very important to have a day at the end of each quarter for reporting - particularly with the amount of data input required.

As an elementary school teacher in Albemarle County, I am thinking about the physical state of our children (among many other factors) as I reviewed these options. All students need time to be physically active, and the later the start date of school, the better the chance of having outdoor recess and physical education. All students need the activity, fresh air, vitamin D, etc. In addition to helping with their physical health, this time helps them do better on their academics. If we start school August 8th, that's the middle of summer, and I can predict what recess and PE would look like in those extreme Virginia summer temperatures. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

I am an ACPS teacher but live in the city. My children go to CCS schools. Whatever calendar is chosen, it MUST be the same as the city in order for me to continue to work in the county. I cannot bring my children to school in the county because of the prohibitive cost (not to mention there are other reasons that don't have to do with money for them to stay in school where they live). Perhaps you can explain the thinking behind starting so early - I don't understand the reasons for it.

Schedule 3 is familiar....question though, why is Friday May 31st not a make-up day or one of the professional days? Schedule 1...definitely most hated...too early of a start time, professional days before and after winter break...why?...3 days at the beginning of the school year to set up a classroom, for new training, etc., way too short of time Schedule 2...Most logical...we don't need multiple planning days at the end of school...perfect timing for end of school(right after AP/SOL testing)

The long winter break is a concern. I believe it ends up being 19 days from school. I would like to maybe see a combination to not have such a long break during Dec. and Jan and use the Dec 21 as a snow day.

I would also prefer to have the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a holiday as well. Two full weeks for winter break is also preferable.

I do not like the Christmas break cut short on both Draft 2 and 3

Draft 1 - I would prefer the 5 teacher professional days at the beginning of the year instead of two together in October and January. We need those days to get rooms together and go over new procedures and planning. Draft 2-Why does this schedule have 3 new teacher days while the other schedules have only 2 why the need for the extra day for New teachers? Draft 3- Large Problem with January. The teacher work day is a week after the end of the semester you will have teachers trying to either finish midyear grades in the high school or finishing year end grades for the classes still on 4x4 schedules all students will have an exam week.

It makes a lot of sense to end the semesters before winter break and June. Also, wouldn't teachers get two paychecks in August since we would get paid for working August and paid from the previous year in August? If that's correct, that would be a HUGE selling point for a short summer.

In elementary, it's great to have the first week of school be a part-week (starting on a Wednesday), because the students are so tired as they get back on schedule. I like the slightly earlier start date of Aug 13 as opposed to the 22, but would actually prefer Aug 15 to be considered.

I live in Greene County with my family. We chose to send my daughter to Greenbrier Elementary in Charlottesville City, because the cost of sending her to an Albemarle school is prohibitive for our family. It would help us a great deal with child care if the Albemarle schedule continued to match with the city schedule.

I like the Aug 8 start calendar with one suggested modification - teachers need 4 workdays before the first day of school. I would be willing to trade off either the October 11 workday or December 21 in order to get the 4 days in August.

Finishing the semester at winter break is very helpful. Two weeks of winter vacation is also very important to me.
don't mind spending august indoors. i don't like xmas break cut short in #'s 2 & 3-- everyone needs to recharge and reset.
I do not want to go to school in early August. I am willing to give up my Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the week at Christmas to not be going to school in the middle of the summer. Schools in the north manage to start school in Sept, so why do we feel that we can't do that? Schools in the eastern part of the state do not start early either. We are placing too much emphasis on the SOL test windows. Maybe we should get the state to test later in the year. I do not want to start school at the beginning of Aug. You are ruining my family yearly vacation time if we do. It's also too hot to be in school at this time. It's just not an idea I am in favor of. Please take this off the table.
August 8th is too early to start. Has the SOL test window been scheduled? If we opt for the last window will there be enough time if we close before the end of May?
It is SO hot in August and an earlier start will add even more drain on the utilities and cost of keeping the schools open. We had several days in June when it was too hot for the children to go outside for recess and that was EARLY JUNE.
I think it is a huge mistake to make Wed. before Thanksgiving a 1/2 day. There will be very poor attendance after having it as a holiday for all these years. In addition, there will be very low morale that day for staff. That needs to go on draft 2 and draft 3. I am not fond of most of the winter break falling after Christmas Day. I understand how it happens on the calendar in which the nine weeks ends before winter break. None-the-less, I think that too will be very unpopular. No 1/2 days at any time except PERHAPS for elementary students.
In order to be able to travel to visit family I enjoy having the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off as well as having two weeks for Christmas break. As far as teaching goes, I'd prefer if school ended shortly after SOLs instead of continuing on for 2-3 more weeks.
I have another job in another state for the month of July and part of August when the weather is warm and families are on vacation. I would not be able to have this job if school started before August 22nd.
Longer Thanksgiving and Winter breaks are key for me.
Draft 2 allows more preparation time at the beginning of the year, which is often filled with numerous meetings. It also allows new teachers more days of preparation (3 vs. 2), which as a newer teacher, I think is important. I find the larger block of time free during Summer able to be more utilized than snippets of days added here and there.
it's going to be difficult to get new technologies in by the start of school. the fiscal year doesn't start until July 1st. That would mean all technologies would have to be purchased, Delivered and deploy in less than a month's time
3 days before students begin the school year for teachers? Really? And hardly any work days built in for report cards? Come on! The 3rd option starting Aug 22 is the only choice that is looking out for teachers!
The early start is great, having the built in holiday time is great, and I would like the 3rd week of May end of year rather than the 17th because I feel the breaks are necessary during the school year rather than at the end for both student and employee success.

The solid learning time early in the school year, the retention of the 3-day, 5-day, 4-day beginning of the year, the long weekends throughout the year when teachers have professional dev days, and real down time in early January, make Draft 1 the best for learning and teaching. Having off the first week in January after New Years makes an exponentially large difference to teachers in having the time to regenerate and have the energy to be their best professionally.

I think draft 3 looks doable without feeling like we are losing so much summer. I think that Christmas break is much too long in Draft 1.

My only concern would be compensation for time lost due to a shorter summer break. That lost time most likely would never be made up if our school board chose draft 1 or 2. Would 10 month employees be compensated for lost time off? If so, how much expense would that add to our budget. I rather have a real pay raise. - Richards Maxwell

i like the idea of the early dismissals for teachers. i also like starting a little earlier in august, but not too early.

for the sake of 12 mos. classified staff it would be helpful to highlight on these calendar displays what our days off are going to be(not just teachers and students) to give us a complete view to better make our decisions on our calendar choices.

Not a fan of number 2... uneven number of days in each quarter. Not happy with the early dismissal days... these days are wasted time!

I am also a parent, as well as a county employee. I appreciate that Draft 2 seems to offer the most uninterrupted instructional schedule, while still completing the first semester prior to winter break. I think starting on Aug. 8 is just too early.

Earlier start dates does not allow adequate time for building preparation. An analysis needs to be performed to review data on increased energy consumption if schools start earlier, given the higher temperatures in early to mid August.

Option 3 does not work due to students having to come back from winter break and take exams. I selected option 1 but suggest modifying it so students returned from winter break on Jan. 7th. The professional days (from Jan 7 & 8) could be redistributed so school started on Aug. 9th (1 additional day for prep) and the other put at the end of the year on May 24th.

Would like to see 3 days for Thanksgiving, 2 weeks for Christmas/Winter Holiday, and last day on June 7. Like half days.

A full pre-week of school is beneficial. Two weeks for December break is excessive. Students, parents, and staff alike are all "done" by Memorial Day. This will be an adjustment for families and the community but it has been an excellent change in Fluvanna. My child is always ready to go back to school in August after getting out in May.

If you are going to start school earlier in August, that is the hottest part of the summer. Come and ride the bus and see how hot the inside of the bus can get. All buses need to have ac on them. The ac buses that the county have now, need to be on the longer route route and not in town on the short route. Can you imagine being on a hot bus for about a hour ride.

It's too warm to be outside in August so why not get a start on the school year? Being done in May would also align us with the counties around us. August 8! yes, yes, yes.

I like the half-days at the end of each quarter.

I currently live in a county that begins on August 8/9 and although it is early, the timing for the summer is great! It would be helpful to have my schedule coincide with my children's schedule. As a parent, my county has tried the 1/2 day early dismissal and found that it created a hardship for working parents. It was difficult to find child care for the 1/2 day; during the 2010/11 school year they did away with them per parents request via a survey and it was much better. I think having the 1/2 days instead of a longer winter break would make it difficult for the folks that travel during the holiday season or for 2 family households who share that time. I really like the early, August 8th start best

Starting the calendar on the 8th or the 13th is basically saying that testing dictates everything we do as a school system, which seems to be the opposite of what is said from the school board and the superintendent. Actions need to be aligned with beliefs and words. I also don't like how draft 2 and 3 have a shorter winter break as a way of nudging people toward draft 1. I feel that another draft needs to be made that is not determined by high school test schedules. What is it that we feel is important? Just tried to submit, and it would not let me submit until I ranked all three. I feel that I should not have to rank an option if it is not viable in my opinion.

I like # 3 because the spring break is closer to April. Also we begin later in the month of August, I like that.

As a teacher I appreciate having a work day before the students return after winter break. With spring break coming so early, there is a long time with no break until the end of the school year. Also, why not make the day before Thanksgiving and Christmas a full day off, especially Thanksgiving. People will take their children out of school that day anyway.

At least a day or two longer winter break, too! Back to school on Jan. 3 or even later.

As a teacher I believe it will be very beneficial to have multiple 2-day blocks of professional development time during the year as opposed to just at the beginning and end of the year.

I'd eventually like draft 2 start date, but I'd like a gradual change over the summer to get to it.

If Draft 1 is adopted make sure that any school make-up days for the 2011-2012 happen before the set end of school day/ This will provide a smoother transition to an earlier school year. The holiday break for 2 weeks +at the end of Dec. and early Jan. with professional days directly before and after gives a needed break for families and gives them extra travel time if needed. It also provides teachers with necessary prep time to gear up for the last half of the school year.

Calendar 1 suggestions: July - New teacher: Jul 30- Aug 3 - need as much mentoring /info as possible Aug - Tchr workdays: Aug. 6-10 - need more prep time before school starts, esp with many meetings/ inservices thrown in. First day of school: Aug. 13 Sept. – Nov - good Dec/Jan - no need for Dec 21 off; we need workday on 8th to prepare for next semester. (On the 21st, will be preparing for holidays instead!) Feb – good Mar. – prefer spring break last week of March, but smart to have after grading period ends. Tchr workday: right AFTER spring break, not before it. April / May - good for SOLs and AP exams. Workday at end a must! NOT FAIR for exam grading, clean up, and sign out duties to be on our own time and dime!

Too much time off for a winter/Christmas break in Draft #1!! Like the placement of spring break in draft #3 and amount of time off for winter/Christmas break as well. Gives more SOL review time and lessens the amount of completely wasted time at end of school year when SOLs are through and teachers stop teaching for the most part after SOLs are through anyway. Just ask my kids, they learn nothing after SOLs - just play time

Workdays must be incorporated after EACH quarter ends so that teachers can do report cards. I don't see this happening consistently in any of the drafts. When would you have teachers doing grades?? Also, a 1/2 day prior to Thanksgiving is a waste - many students would not attend school that day. I think the earliest start might be a hard sell with fall sports practice and families who traditionally take August vacations, but it makes the best sense to me. It's a good balance of academic, work days, and days off. Good luck!

Draft I: There is too little time before school for teachers to collaborate and work in rooms before school starts. When will open houses be held? I do like professional learning days before and after Christmas holiday. I don't like having most of the snow days tacked on at the end of year. This negates one benefit of starting so early, getting out of school early. Draft II: Good amount of time for pre-school planning. Don't like Nov. 21 as a 1/2 day. Teachers fought hard in the past to have a 3 day holiday at thanksgiving! Do like early dismissal days! Draft III: Good amt. of time before school. Love early dismissal. Christmas holiday too short. Don't like all snow days at end.

I am a teacher in Albemarle County and I feel strongly that in our profession we need professional development and grading days. Having exams before Winter Break is an excellent idea but we need to have time to evaluate the exams and plan for the next semester. Draft 1 provides at least one day to help in that process. We also need time during the school year to evaluate our performance and our student's performance. There is not time during in regular school hours for this work. We need planned time. I am highly in favor of the early start and release before Memorial Day.

Starting school so early in August is hardly a summer break at all. It sounds really close to how year round schools have their calendars arranged with two or three week breaks in between. We'd have a bit longer of a break, but the consecutive school days will lead to major burn out. The later in August we start, the better everyone will be.

It is imperative that we move the start date of school up. We have changed to the 4 x 4 schedule willingly but have not changed the calendar to coincide with the schedule. The semester should end prior to winter break as stated in Draft 1 and 2 of the calendar. It does not make any sense for the students to come back and then test to finish up their semester. We should have a fresh start for everyone when we get back from break.

I have no use for a week off in the middle of March. I would much rather have More time off for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

As a staff member I chose draft 2 because it gave us 5 days prior to the students starting school to prepare. I felt that Draft 1 did not give us enough time at the beginning of school to prepare. It also let us out of school earlier than draft 3.

Draft 1 would be devastating for families that are involved in summer swim teams. JSL's, which are huge in our area, are traditionally held the last weekend in July. This leaves very little time for summer travel plans, especially for families of ACPS teachers with swimmers. Also, I don't see the advantage of a three-week winter holiday. Draft 2 is the best, in my view, because it concludes the first semester before the winter break and allows for some teacher worktime on the back end of the winter break, before students arrive for the second semester.. Draft 3 is okay--pretty similar to what we already have. I do prefer the Wednesday start to the school year over the Monday start.

Draft 2 with the August 13 Start seems reasonable, however could Jan. 3 and 4 be used as holidays to extend the winter break and then push the last day to May 21 and then push Spring break to a half day on 22 of March with the last full week of March similar to that of Draft 3.

As an employee I like this schedule the best. It looks great. I like the idea of getting out earlier.

Starting in early August is TERRIBLE!! We have too much time off at Christmas. We do not need to be done by the end of May. I am VERY much against starting any earlier than we already do! Even Aug 23 is to early!!

I am wondering what the impetus is behind changing the calendar.I just compared our schedule with Henrico County's schedule and I much prefer their schedule where they actually start after Labor Day and teach primarily on an A/B schedule (not 4x4). They started 9/7 for 2010-2011 and ended 6/17 for students totaling 174.5 days whereas our students will attend 177.5 days in 2011-2012. I think it is very hot in August and starting earlier is not very cost effective for cooling buildings and transporting students. It also cuts into summer jobs for high schoolers at area pools, etc. If anything, I would like to see schools start later not earlier.

A half day the Wednesday before Thanksgiving - that is a waste of time!

The Albemarle Calendar needs to match the City Calendar. There are many parent teachers who have students in the city schools and vice versa. Also, starting early August for next calendar year would mean the summer break would be very short.

It is best that the school year ends shortly after AP and SOL Tests have been administered. Many students see completion of these tests as the end of their school year.

I like draft 1 because although it starts earlier, you maintained ACPS' length of breaks. These provide great rest and recovery for students and teachers alike throughout the year. I strongly believe a 1/2 day before Thanksgiving would have high absenteeism and be hard-to-use instructionally as a result.

I really like draft 1 except the spring break. I would still like spring break to be the first week in April.

Too early a start for the school year may not allow teachers sufficient time to complete university level courses.

- SOL's would take place AT THE ACTUAL END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. Everyone with a working brain cell knows ALL days after SOL's are worthless educationally. The early starts would finally acknowledge this farce. I want to emphasize this - there are NO educational goals served with vacation just weeks ahead AFTER SOL'S. I know that many teachers look to this time to actually TEACH subjects/concepts that they consider important but have no time because of SOL prep. FACT is students stop after SOL's. We have Pavlovianly trained them to stop "salivating" once those tests end. I'm speaking from 34 years of experience. WHATEVER you can do to put LESS time academically after SOL's will be beneficial. -

I like the equal number of 45 days in each quarter in Draft 1.

Draft 1&2 - Why can't we start school on 8/20 or 8/15 and finish at the end of May? What's the significance of finishing before month end? Draft 2&3 - Why do teachers need 5 days to prep for school? 3 days are better. Why are we losing the day before Thanksgiving? My family and I leave town Tuesday evening and have to travel all day Wednesday to go and visit our family so that we can eat Thanksgiving dinner on that day, not the day after. We cannot afford to fly. We lose at least 12 hours of driving if you make us work on that Wednesday. Why are we losing 3 days of our Christmas break?

Many school employees work summer jobs to supplement their income. The earlier start dates would dramatically affect this situation. I am extremely opposed to these very early start dates!

Why does the calendar on Aug. 13th end the earliest? I understand the 8th start has more PD days, which I value, but draft 2 starts 5 days later, and ends a week earlier. Seems as though there should be a happy medium, these choices seem extreme. How about start on the 13th, have a few PD days and end on the 24th, rather than the 17th with no PD days.

At this point, it would be very hard for teachers that have vacation plans to change them...We are booked to go the 13-20th, so I would need a sub. for the entire week if school starts before Aug 22. (Also, August 13 is a Saturday, so I guess the correct start day should be August 15th.) However, if you put the dates out there for Summer 2013, there is a lot more flexibility that far in advance and teachers/parents might like the earlier start dates...thanks for allowing comments!

For Draft 1, there are not enough teacher work days before school starts. Teachers are not paid for the summer months, but they would have to come in over the summer to be prepared for the start of school. For Draft 2, there are not enough days off at Winter Break--students need a full two week break, and we could end later. May 17 is a very early end of the year, possibly too early. I am concerned that there might be too much of a break over the summer during which many students will lose some of what they gained during the year. Particularly in Draft 2 and 3, there are not many professional development days. I just came from CAI, and I was told the School Board wanted more professional development, not less.

Please do not do Draft 3; we need to have clean semester breaks. Draft 3 would have students out for the Winter Holiday, only to return to exams or SOLs or both. Both assessments would suffer. Draft 2 is neat and clean with reasonable start/stop times for students.

Please consider that there are some PowerSchool db admins and counselors that are only 11 month employees and need the additional time in August to complete student registration. DART cannot order electronic equipment until after July 1 and an earlier start date makes it impossible to deploy new equipment and update older equipment before school starts. Building Services needs time to clean and complete capital improvements. DART and Building Services' schedules are also impacted by summer school and parks & rec programs. Also, the SOL testing window needs to be considered if there will be enough time if school lets out before June to complete make-up tests.

I LOVED #1! It will definitely cut short the first summer (all will for that matter to some degree), but each nine weeks has a staff development day following it. Also, for the students taking end of quarter/semester assessments, to have them before the breaks, especially the one before winter break is wonderful. Often the older students tend to come back after the holidays dragging and hate having these hanging over their heads during the breaks. Elementary students can benefit from constant instruction and go into break having these behind them. The Winter Break is awesome and the fact that we could/would be out by Memorial Day is great! Two would be my second choice, but the half days before a break seem silly, as some won't even come!

Draft 1 starts earlier but gets out later than Draft 2. There are not enough teacher prep days prior to school opening and too many throughout the year. This is definitely the least beneficial from a learning standpoint for kids. Considering SOL testing and midterm exams, this would be difficult to maintain consistency in learning. I think we could make 3 or 2 work for kids, but Draft 1 isn't acceptable.

Please consider the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving a full day off.

I love teaching. Still, I need my summers to rejuvenate. I enjoy the long hot summer months and would be greatly disappointed to be in the classroom instead of on the beach in August.

I dislike the first calendar. The winter break is way too long. I can't see any reason to wait until Jan. 9 to return to school. Also, there is no teacher work day at the end of the year. The third one is similar to what we do now, but that calendar would have us have exams immediately after winter break. That is never a good thing for the students. I like the fact that the second one has us getting out really early. If we are going to start early, I want us to get out early as well. I do regret that all of the calendars have done away with the travel day before Thanksgiving day.

My family has a beach house rented every year for our family vacation the first week in August. We have gone there for the past 10 years at this time. Please consider family get togethers, vacations, and special times when thinking about changing the calendar for your employees. Thank you.

Draft 1 & 2 have spring break too early - draft one does not give teacher adequate prep time BEFORE the start of the school year. If the county is leaning towards an earlier opening, then it should be done over a two year period so as not to make one summer significantly shorter than normal.

Ideal schedule would have the 1st semester end before Christmas break (so midterms are finished and January is a fresh start), two full weeks off at Christmas, a teacher workday at the end of each grading period (half days are good but not enough to get all grading done), no school Nov 21, 5 pre-school teacher workdays (3 days in Draft 1 are not enough to be prepared), and grading periods that are around the same number of days (not one with 43 and one with 50 like Draft 2). Draft 1 starts too early in August and Draft 2 ends too early in May. A half day before Thanksgiving in Drafts 2 and 3 may be a wasted day because families will leave to travel for the holiday. Two teacher workdays at the end of the year in Draft 3 are unnecessary.

The 1st two options will present a financial burden to teachers with children that don't attend the county schools. Teachers will have to pay for up to a month of child care for their children before they start their other schools. The Wed before Thanksgiving (11/21/11) needs to be a full day off of school. It is a non-religious holiday that most families celebrate, regardless of religious denomination. Many families need this day to travel to see loved ones, or to get ready to have a house full of company. To balance this day, you can make Thursday March 21 a full day, rather than a half day.

As a teacher I find early dismissal days before an holiday, a wasted teaching day...i.e. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day.(Draft 2 and 3). I think it should be left as a holiday as represented in Draft 1.

I do not prefer ANY option that requires an earlier start date. What is the RATIONALE for starting earlier in August, change for the sake of change? AVOID placing "professional development days" before/after holidays - they needlessly prolong student vacation and teachers will simply use them for personal leave.

I would love to see the county move to an entirely different calendar, one in which each 9-week school session is followed by a 4-week break. The school year would look like this: 9-4-9-4-9-4-9-4. The beauty of such a system is that those students who failed the 9-week session would be obligated to retake the 9-week session during the 4-week session. If teachers wanted to work one or more of the 4-week sessions, they could do so. Students would not lose as much information as they currently lose during the long summer. Teachers could use the 4-week sessions for travel, getting themselves back together, etc.... I think teachers would even be willing to go 10-3-10-3-10-3-10-3, which would provide an extra week for planning/evaluation.

If you are not going to keep spring break first week of April you should coordinate with UVA break.

Personally I hope that we keep the same schedule that we've been using. None of the 3 proposed calendar drafts appeals to me but since I had to rank them I did. I personally don't care when we start school in August, but I do care about how long Christmas break is. Draft 1 is the only one that keeps our winter break fairly the same. If I absolutely had to choose I'd pick draft 1: start early, same winter break, finish early.

Please do the right thing and do not start school so early. There is no valid reason for having school start this early especially in an area that is so hot and humid in August. Also, there are many parents who will simply skip the first few weeks of school.

AP and SOL testing occurs in May, after which time, extra instruction time is "wasted". #1 is very early and would make next summer dreadfully short. There appears to be very few days off in the second model, which would be good for continuity of instruction, though a bit difficult to endure from break to break. Having the whole month of June off would be a nice change.

Please consider that many of us are teachers who have leadership positions within our buildings. We spend much of the summer planning for the fall semester on behalf of our teams. In addition, we meet as team leaders in the first week of August, starting in our buildings during the second week. If you change the school year to begin earlier, we will then be required to begin in July, giving us precious little time to rest and regroup for the upcoming year. We have already lost many excellent educators to the private sector and will lose even more if you create this change in our calendar. Thank you for your consideration.

I would like to know the reasoning behind the calendar changes. What is not working with our current start and end date? The only reason I ranked August 8th as number two is because it is the only option with a full two weeks off during winter break. Many families travel long distances during that time and having a full two weeks off then is more conducive to travel and rest. I really like the August 13 start date, but wish there was a full two weeks off for winter break. I'd even take a shorter spring break.

I like the idea of starting earlier and getting out earlier

I think you could run into some problems with summer band/football camps where those secondary teachers come back early to start their programs... what would be the cost implications of running high AC and cooling bills during most of August?

Let teachers have a real vacation from teaching.

Although Draft 2 is my top ranked choice, I am not in favor of all of the half days. I would rather keep the start and end dates to the year, work full days on the proposed half days, and have a few more days off over the Winter break. I guess that would be a compromise between Draft 1 and 2. Draft 1 does not give enough time for classroom set up before school starts, and I would not want to push the teacher work days back any more on that calendar, or else we'd be starting in July.

I do not consider any of these acceptable options. There are many vacations changes that are sure to interfere with family plans and learning opportunities. Moving the end of the year into May will change the SOL window which will interfere with many learning opportunities (mainly Wallops Island trips, Triple C camp, and music camps) that students enjoy participating in. It will also effect the music programs that use the months of April and May to travel for competitions. We are currently not allowed to schedule trips in May due to SOLs obligations. Because of that, we use the month of April for traveling and with the new schedule - the SOL obligation will sure to interfere with our travel opportunities in April.

(my answers continued)...Also, moving spring break to March and taking away the Wednesday before Thanksgiving will interfere with many family plans for travel. Teachers use this time for family travel as well. I think taking that Wednesday away will only make teachers want to take a personal day that day which is actually not allowed, causing bitterness towards administration. And, two weeks for Christmas is really a requirement for all families. I know my own family uses that time to visit different parts of our family all over the country. With less than two weeks that really will be impossible, causing teachers and students to take more time off of school. Taking exams after winter break is not a big deal. Leave it as it is.

I think the early dismissal days, coming before holidays, will cause a rise in absenteeism. Which ever calendar is adopted, be sure to include teacher work days at the end of each reporting period for teachers to work on report cards, especially the first two marking periods, because they will have to use another new report card system.

Draft # 1 - we go back early, but the current holidays and breaks are maintained in length, there are workdays after each grading period, we get out at the end of May, which would be wonderful since most students see the SOL's as their ending date of learning anyways and it gives all teachers/students 2 whole months off. Draft # 2 we go back later and get out earlier than draft #1 , but we sacrifice time off during the school year(much needed breaks to recharge) and there is only one full workday to complete grades, to give teachers only 1/2 day to input grades and finalize things is extremely difficult and taxing on teachers. Draft #3 is the most like the current calendar, but with less favorable breaks & workdays that we currently have.

It is highly adviseable to oblige the employees with the day before Thanksgiving as we are in need of this time for preparation with family for the holiday. Is it possible to tack on this half day's worth of time at another date? Thank you for seeking my opinion.

Draft 1 Or 2 allows for the semester to end at winter break, which is more suitable for SOL's & exams.

Please keep the 2 week winter break. It will be very difficult to fly home on the 2nd and teaching for 2 days of a week is a lost cause. I propose a fourth version: start September one, keep only one week for winter break and stop end of May. Teaching has become a moot point for many after SOLs, AP, final and county exams. Thanks for asking.

The first draft only allows for 3 days for teachers to unpack and put their rooms together for open house. Elementary teachers in my school usually begin unpacking weeks before we are required to report to work. Elementary teachers need a work day after each grading period to work on grading, reports and report cards. Our students do not leave early and are watching movies in our classrooms at the end of each quarter. Why are we no longer getting the Wednesday off before Thanksgiving? I thought AEA worked to get us this day. Employees need time to travel and prepare for the holiday too. We no longer have a conference day built into the any of the calendars. Are we suppose to hold evening only conferences now?

I'm glad you are considering having the 2nd quarter grading period ending with the holiday break--that makes a lot of sense! I would suggest making it possible for someone to select more than 1 option for their role in responding to this survey--I chose 'employee' because I am one (classroom teacher), but I'm also a parent, so I felt that should be taken into consideration, too.

Would it not make sense to start next school year one week early and then the following year another week early so that we did not lose two weeks of summer vacation at the same time. 2012 with calendar 2 then, use the format for 2013 from calendar 1. This only takes one of our weeks of vacation away each year instead of two in the same summer. 2 less weeks is a BIG deal.

I like how Draft 2 ends the first semester before Winter Break and that the end of year SOL's will likely coincide with Final Exams in non-SOL classes.

As a Bus Driver for the county, you have to consider the weather, esp. the HEAT. If the County wanted to start earlier, maybe implement half days to make up for the heat. The heat takes a toll on the students and driver. The longer routes have no AC busses, the AC busses are in the inner city loop. The idea of getting out by the end of May is a selling point for me. It's the high HEAT, that concerns me in August. Alot of us drivers brought water to help the students cope with the heat this past year.

I already have commitments for August 11-14, 2012. Therefore Draft 3 works best for me. My second choice is Draft 1, with three days off for Thanksgiving, and two weeks off for Christmas.

This is clearly an unfair survey. Teachers are on summer break and participation is necessary by July 11th.

Overall, I prefer calendar #2, but I would move the return date for students at winter break to the Monday, Jan. 7th and use Jan 3,4th as professional development, or just the 4th for grading. I would add those days to the end of the year. I know that makes the quarter count off balance, but the end of the year days don't get used all the fully with all the testing in secondary schools and for elementary, it doesn't really matter. If we move to full credits, not half credits, we really only need the semesters to be of somewhat equal length. Make-up days could then be through the end of May, which should be fine.

Besides being way too early to start school, draft one only allows for 3 workdays before the first day of school. Absolutely not enough time for teachers to prepare. Draft 2 is still too early for school to start but would be better than 1. That leaves draft 3 as the best choice. Will the results of this survey be made public?

Dismissing so late in Dec before Xmas is really problematic for motivation, concentration, and work production.

THREE days at Thanksgiving SHOULD BE KEPT in all drafts. 40 days too short for the final quarter (draft 2). Why fewer teaching days in draft 3? SOL testing in Oct. very close to the end of 1st quarter - impact on possible quarterly or mid-semester assessments? Would all SOL testing happen BEFORE winter break, as well as exams? What happens if there's inclement weather BEFORE break but the new semester is scheduled to begin right after break? What's longevity of the "early start" plan in terms of state start-date requirements? Is this weather dependent? Could calendar shift to after Labor Day at later date? Summer jobs/camps/vacations -impact on families and staff due to early start? REALLY short summer break in 2012?!

I really like the draft 1 idea of starting early, finishing early and having extra time at the winter break!

The full two week winter break is something all the teachers I work with appreciate and enjoy. Any possibilities of making the winter break a full 2 weeks with the Aug. 22nd start date? Great idea ending school in late May -allows for more instruction time before end of the year assessments. Most assessments are done by mid May- going a full month after that was too much. Thank You!

Starting students mid-week seems to help them get back into the school routines. (I think it helps teachers as well.) Ending the semester before winter break and ending the year at the end of the SOL testing window offer a better use of instructional time.

Draft 1 obviously has more planning time for teachers built in during the academic year, but 3 days of planning time before the school year opens in August is not sufficient, and will likely result in teachers working off-contract time to prepare. There should not be any "all-county" time required if that draft is approved. Given all of the other required activities at the building level, these 3 days will be eaten up pretty quickly. In draft 2, the half days seem worthless for instruction, and it results in less planning (grading) time at the end of the quarter. Why can't those days be full planning days and still end school a week later-still finishing before Memorial Day?

Obviously these calendars are being driven by SOL testing. I actually would put Draft 1 as my first choice if the 3 teacher work days could all be dedicated to preparing our rooms and materials for our students. However, since there are only 3 days and administrators are likely to suck up all the time with endless meetings, I do not see how teachers, especially at the elementary level, could be ready for students on the first day of school.

As an educator and former parent of ACPS students (6 of whom graduated from AHS) I believe it is in the best interest of the middle and high school students for their 2nd semester to end before winter break.

I chose #3 because Spring Break includes Easter weekend.

I know the community receives a lot of feedback from elementary parents concerning summer swim leagues, vacations, etc. Please take into consideration that high schools begin Fall VHSL practices August 2 and a large number of students participate in these activities. High school band camps also happen during this time as well. Completing the first semester prior to Winter Break is also important.

I am absolutely opposed to starting early August. Summer college classes for recertification are still going on. These calendars do not coincide with any other school system but Fluvanna and we have nothing but sports in common with them. None of these calendars have 2 weeks off for winter break as we are accustomed to. Again, there is absolutely NO REASON TO START EARLY AUGUST EXCEPT FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION TO TACK ON MORE TEACHER WORKDAYS AT THEIR LEISURE AND OR MAKE-UP SNOW DAYS WHEN WE ALREADY EXCEED THE STATE'S MANDATED HOURS EVERY YEAR.

All of the calendars are not good. I would rather stick to the calendar of this year. I do not like starting early or taking away from winter break or having an earlier spring break! They are all bad ideas!

Secondary students are better served with the semester ending before winter break. Teacher work and professional days are vital and well placed at the end of a quarter. An early release at the end of the quarter for the Aug 8 start would provide time for end-of-quarter work as well as professional development - I suggest that be added. Also, a professional day is needed at the end of the year. Thank you for the careful consideration and time in the development of these calendars.

I do not want to start any earlier in Aug. Some schools do not have AC in the kitchen. To have to come to work for the whole month of August in the summer heat will be awful for those of us who work in the kitchen and also for the students coming thru the line.

Draft 1- I like the idea of starting early getting out earlier, I love how you have the students coming back from Christmas break two days after the teachers do, I think that gives the teachers time to settle back in before the students come in. I also like the break being in March because it is usually a pretty long haul from January to April so that breaks it up a bit. I really like draft 1 more than any of the others. I don't care for the half days, it is harder for parents to have someone watch their kids and it also seems like the students don't have much time to do anything in just a half day. I would not suggest that at all, especially elementary level.

A full 2 week xmas break would be nice in all 3 options.

You need to understand how hot it still is in August. It's unbearable, a lot of the bus drivers get sick. One of the drivers had a heart attack and ended up in the hospital. Do you need that type of reputation? Why can't we have a full two weeks off at Christmas? The teachers have plenty of time to make up the needed hours at the end of the year. Since they don't do any class work the last two weeks of school!! If you are going to change the calendar the third one is better than the other two. We would like and need SOME summer break.

Easter Monday is a must - although it is a religious holiday, it is also a large secular holiday. Most are travelling to be with family and miss school due to travel. At least with Easter Monday off families can get together without the stress of returning Easter Sunday or plain skipping as many students do on the following Monday.

Draft 1 (August 8th) start makes the most sense as the semester will end in December and students will receive plenty of instructional time prior to AP and SOL testing. The symmetry between first and second semester is also appealing. Keeping two weeks for winter break is also a plus!

I would rather see a whole school year model with two weeks vacations throughout the year with a month vacation during the summer. It seems to me that this calendar is based on buying time for SOL windows instead of real effective learning for students.

The major concern I have with Draft 2 is the end of first semester. I firmly believe first semester exams should be before the winter break.....draft 2 leaves the possibility that would not occur. I'm also uncertain why we would change our traditional spring break time by one or two weeks. Leaving it the first week of April makes a lot of sense regardless of the end of school date. Going nine straight weeks of 5 day per week instruction is difficult on students and staff. Keeping the break the first week of April allows for some break in this cycle.

Numerous residents are not originally from Charlottesville; and families are quite a distance away. Please do not forget about allowing traveling time for these families.

#1 is best, despite the VERY early start, due to the long winter break (and the coinciding completion of the first semester), the mid-week start to school, the workdays at the beginning of second semester, and the equal lengths of the quarters. (#2 has the worst inequity with 50 days in the 3rd quarter and 40 in the 4th! In HS, the last term is taken up mostly with AP/SOL testing, so the # of instructional days is limited anyway. I know most snow happens in the 3rd quarter and is made up 4th. But, if there is little/no snow, then having a very short 4th quarter count as much toward the semester grade as a lengthy 3rd seems unfair and poor planning.) #2 and #3 are distant rivals -- the way to make us vote for the incredibly short summer?

The Winter holiday break is too long at 2 weeks in as much as it takes extra time to engage the kids again. Starting back in early August interferes with activities designed around the summer months. Draft 3 appears most doable for the staff and kids alike.

I much prefer the early start in August, given that we get a 2 week break for Christmas/New Year - and an early finish in May. The first plan is the far superior one, even though we have such an early start. That is to be balanced by more time off during the school year when the year needs to be broken up a little more for children and families to travel for holidays.

Draft 1. Shortened preschool week, but we're finished early enough for some folks to take advantage of preseason rates. No half days, which is good. I would suggest a half day for the last day of school. A whole day is a waste. Draft 2, 3. I don't care for so many half days.

Do not like August 8 start, it will still be hot for nearly a month, limiting outside time for kids, etc.

need time to clean and improve on the inside of the school like new floor and ceiling tiles. contract type work or the job may not be as good as the county payed for. also the teacher's need time off to relax mentally and physically this is a very tasking job. also you may need to do a survey with the kids they will tell you how they feel.

Why is the start date being pushed back? August 22nd is the absolute earliest return date that should be considered. Why is Spring Break being moved? I hope that there will be public meetings to discuss these drafts before a final one is approved. Will the results of these surveys, including comments, be made available?

I prefer to have most of August off for summer vacations, but if we are to start early then I like the 2 week vacation in December/January offered in draft 1.

I would prefer to have Draft three. The only input I have would be to have Nov. 21 (Wed.) off and add May 31st to make it up. Other than that I like it. I do not like that school would start Aug.8th or 13th.

I do not think any of these are as good as the 2010/2011 calendar. I like having more winter break in December and less after the New Year. I would rather go later in June and start later in August and have Spring Break in April. Also we have many students who go away for Thanksgiving and need to have Wed off. We need two weeks for winter break.

I really like the half days embedded in the calendar. I could see some VERY needed team PLC time being on these days! Thanks for asking us for input!

Draft 3 - Move 8/15 to 1/14. Teachers need wkdays at end of quarter NOT over a week after qtr. Move 8/16 to end Apr, beginning of May. Teachers do NOT need 5 days preschool, but more between semesters and after qtrs. Draft 1 - Move Oct 12 to end April, beginning of May. Draft 2 - Start school on 8/9. Take 8/9 wkday and place on 12/21 and make 12/20 half day. Take 8/10 tchr wkday and place on 3/15 and make 3/14 half day. It's unconscionable to not have wkdays after marking periods 2 and 3 and expect tchrs to figure grades and prepare for new qtrs/semesters on their holidays. A wkday over a week after end of quarter is NOT helpful to tchrs and ultimately not in best interest of students.

Other than having the 1st semester end before winter break I can't find a good reason to move the school calendar. What is the rationale? Because Fluvanna does it? Are we Fluvanna? We tried to emulate some of the surrounding counties with the 4x4, that clearly didn't work out so well. Why not stick with what has worked in the past? Are we changing just to change?

I do not like any of these three scenarios. I greatly prefer how the schedule is now - given schedules with families, work, other schools systems.

I do not particularly like any of the proposed calendars. Breaks are cut shorter and given the start and end dates - school schedules with my children and my work will be negatively affected. Remember that decent breaks are a necessity for sane teachers too (Winter holiday, thanksgiving).

I like getting out earlier, but not starting too terribly early. I also like having a decent winter break. Calendar 3 causes us to lose some winter break time. I like the shorter length of Professional Learning Days at the beginning of the year, but not at the cost of starting very early.

The many parents who work in Albemarle County and reside in Charlottesville City, including myself, will need the county to continue to align its calendar with the city OR to reduce the fees to send our children to county schools.

I have two main points to make. First, as someone who really relies on supplemental income in the summer (this area is very expensive on a single income), starting school two weeks earlier will cost me in the neighborhood of \$1,000 that I will not be able to make up, even in the following year when we leave earlier. Second, it would seem that wanting to get 2 quarters in before the holiday break heavily favors the high and middle school, and does nothing for the elementary students and staff. For the above reasons, I am in favor of the final calendar choice. If there is a concern with exams and the middle/high school students, then shorten Christmas break and add a couple of days in February or March when school morale is typically lowest.

While I understand the benefits and concept of Draft 1, I think it is unnecessary. If starting early is a necessity and preference, I think that Draft 2 is just fine. I prefer Draft 3, but Draft 2 is a nice compromise.

I think a half day off before Thanksgiving is a complete waste of time.(Anyone working inside of a school building knows that no learning will occur because half the kids will be out.) May 17th is too early to get out of school. Nobody needs two weeks of winter break. The worst thing about all three is March spring break! That stinks . If your not the elite that can jet off to sunny weather, you get to freeze here.

Draft 1 would shorten the summer break for students and staff significantly the first year it is implemented. If the County wants an earlier start date, it would make more sense to phase this in after a school year with an earlier ending date. I teach in the County schools, however, my children attend City schools, and it would be extremely appreciated if the Spring Breaks could possibly be coordinated. If the board reviews the tuition policy for nonresident teachers in order to lower the tuition I would have my children attend the County schools, and the coordinated scheduling would not be an issue. But for now, my husband and I take days off work in order to be home with our children where the City and County's calendars do not align.

Draft 1 - no need for two weeks off at the holidays plus 2 teacher workdays. We would also need a teacher workday at the end of the school year, which is not on the draft. Finally, school just starts too early. Draft 3 - essentially the current school calendar and it just makes more sense to end the second quarter before holiday break. Never a need for 5 staff development days at the beginning of the school year. Draft 2 - Concern about entering grades at end of 2nd quarter - guess early release and Jan. 2 would be used for that. Good scheduled time for Spring Break - always been scheduled too late. 3rd quarter is long w/o a break. Have always needed a break in the fall - 3 days - VERY long time from beginning of year to T'giving.

Albemarle County is a very transient county. Your models that start later in August seem to forget that. Why? How can these people be with family during special times? Also, states in north can start after Labor Day and still maintain a end of year that occurs in early June, why can't we? Their strategy is a longer day; can this be considered?

I would like to see consideration given to the Wednesday of Thanksgiving Week being added back regardless of which calendar is chosen. As an employee, I have no interest in school starting earlier in the calendar year. In fact, I would prefer our school starting after Labor Day.

Draft 1 The early start poses a major problem for student staffed facilities open until Labor Day. Also swimming competitions are the beginning of August. No end of year work days for teachers. Christmas break good length. Draft 2 Quarter 3 has 50 days add three days to Christmas break. Quarter 4 needs more days - it's hard to get everything done in 40 days especially with SOLs, AP exams and graduation/end of year. May 24 or May 17 way too early to end year. Where are teacher work days at end of marking periods? Draft 3 Start days better No teacher work days at end of quarter 2 Take two of work days from beginning(Aug) and add to after quarter 2

I feel that option 1 gives students too much time out of school during the Winter Break. They would be out a total of 17 days. Teachers would spend too much time reviewing and reteaching when students return. Option 2 - May 17? Last day of school? Maybe adding a few more professional development days to extend the school year would be beneficial to teachers. Option 3 - I would rank as the best calendar. I feel it gives families their summer but also gives appropriate instruction time during the school year. Also provides ample professional development days for teachers.

I do not like the idea of going back any earlier I love my summers breaks , and I'm sure the students do also.

Disadvantages of draft 1: a) Teacher workdays/professional development days are not well balanced; with too few at the beginning of the school year and too many following the 1st and 2nd quarter; b) The Jan. 2-8 student holidays will interfere with parent work schedules; and c) preconditioning programs that start before the school year such as football, track, and marching band will be adversely affected. Family vacation times would be adversely affected. Draft 2 provides very little teacher work time at the ends of quarters, when grades and reports are due. I prefer draft 3, which provides the usual amount of time for pre-conditioning programs, has the best post-Christmas start, and allows an extra week in May for test make-ups/retakes

Students and some of us school employees would like to enjoy our summer without having to worry about going back to school when it is still summer weather to enjoy. Students brains are still on summer vacation. They get burned out on learning having to be in school 11 months(the only month out of the year that they get the whole month off is july). out of the year.

I feel strongly that everyone benefits from a full 2 week Christmas break and 3 full days for Thanksgiving. These are the times many people travel. While I hate the idea of starting so early in August, I would rather give that up for the needed rest in the middle of the school year. We are tired then. What I REALLY wish is that we would extend the school day hours so we could work less days per year and still get in all the needed academic time. I favor a longer day with 2 full recesses for the kids.

Teachers desperately need a teacher workday after each nine weeks to work on grades/report cards. Draft 2 doesn't have one after the 3rd nine weeks. Draft 3 has one a week and a half after the 2nd nine weeks but most likely at that point it would not be used for grades/report cards but staff development.

Love all 3 calendars. only concern is no break in April in either of the 3 drafts April gets really long if there is not some type of break, even if it's just 1 day

The first one isnt as "just get school done" as the second one is. The first one makes the most sense and is more student centered.

I'm a 200 day employee.

I am opposed to moving the start of school to the beginning of August. The energy used in air conditioning costs in August verses June is one very large reason. I also do not feel we should be changing our schedule to accommodate SOL testing dates in the spring and end of semester testing in the winter.

Draft number 2 needs a teacher workday at the end of the 3rd quarter. There is no time built in to do report cards, especially for the elementary teachers who must also write comments. All of the drafts need a teacher workday within 2 weeks of the last day of school. The elementary kids take their report cards with them ON the last day of school (they are not mailed as the middle and high school reports are) so we must have grades AND comments finished by that time. We spend numerous hours after school finishing paperwork for the end of the year that there is no time to do during the school day.

The early dismissal days are NOT worthwhile, with the possible exception of the last day of school. There are many absences anyway if people are trying to travel and the partial day discourages useful instructional time. I recommend making them full days and giving the day before Thanksgiving off for a full day.

As a teacher who puts a lot of effort into my work, I need the breaks during the school year to refuel & get caught up. I would also appreciate starting earlier in the year so that students would be in a better position for the AP exams & SOL tests. For those reasons, Draft 1 is my first choice.

WHAT happened to teacher workdays (no meetings, teachers work on grades & in their classrooms) at the end of each quarter? Faculty & Staff continue to have ZERO paid holidays days. Charlottesville City School Employees have 5 paid holidays; Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, MLK, & Memorial Day are ALL days of "forced unemployment"! We do NOT get paid for any of those days! Draft #1 is horrible, only 3 teacher PLD days before kids return and NO end of year work days!!!! Draft #2 is not much better, high absentee rate on the 1/2 days of 11/21 & 12/21, NO work day after the third quarter. Draft #3 still includes the two 1/2 days that will be "treading water days". Workday for 1st semester to work on exams & grades is missing

An August 8th or 13th start is just too early for the children to start. A lot of parents and teachers vacation in the first 2 weeks of August and many children swim on various swim teams and the swim season isn't over until the very end of July. Finally the weather is very hot and humid in early August making it difficult for the children to have even a short recess outdoors so the August 22 start is in my opinion the best time to begin. Thank you.

Draft 1: Could winter break go from December 17 until January 2 instead? If this is the calendar that's chosen, it seems preferable to be off the week before Christmas instead of the week after New Year's.

I think that things should stay the same.

Key opposition to draft 1 comes from the notion of sandwiching 3 professional development days around winter break. Draft 3 still put us into June finishing the year and has any/all make-up days tacked on.

I am a parent and an employee, and I like the thought of being in school when it's so miserably hot and humid and being free for the summer during the really pleasant temperatures of May and June.

The early start will make for a very short summer break the first year. I do like the professional development days grouped together for some continuity for a change--no little bit here, little bit there. I also think it important to preserve the 3 days at Thanksgiving and 2 weeks at winter break so that families have opportunities to travel to be together.

As a teacher, I am pleased to see that professional development days are clustered as in Draft 1. That may provide some continuity. I may not like the early start date--makes for a very short break next year, but do not want to see major holidays shortened.

I think the first year that we have an early start date will be difficult for summer school students as well as employees but after next year, it would balance out with school ending in May. I do believe that Draft 1 is the best due to professional development days being together and for vacations which allow families to be together.

Please consider maximizing time for new teacher orientation.

People have come to count on the Wed. before Thanksgiving off for travel....Have costs for AC been factored in for August?

Do not want to be on school buses, the month of August, not all buses have air conditioning, it's hard on the drivers, and the children, honestly all buses should have air, it's not used that much out of the school year, to be that costly. I would say leave it as it is. What happens to starting school after Labor Day, and getting out by Memorial Day, we get too many days off during the school year in order for that to happen, We really don't need all those days off.

Modifications of draft 2: - Start Wednesday, August 15 - end 1st Nine Weeks (44 Days) on Tuesday, October 16; no October student holiday - full day off Wednesday, November 21 - 2nd Nine Weeks (44 days) ends Friday, December 21 - Return from Break/start Third Nine Weeks (48 days) Monday, January 7 (Prof. Days January 3-4) - Last Day of Fourth Nine Weeks (44 days) scheduled Thursday, May 23

I would like to see County and City school calendars remain aligned.

What is the purpose of starting earlier? Having a teacher work day at the end of each quarter makes completion of report cards, revision of pacing guides, analysis of assessments, etc. more manageable. The number of days in each quarter varies considerably in Draft #2. It would be more beneficial to have additional days in the 1st quarter since time is needed to get to know students and develop class routines (responsive classroom). How will the three professional learning days (Aug. 3, 6, 7) be used in Draft #1 ? It takes a minimum of 3 days to physically prepare a classroom for students. A day of team planning and materials preparation is needed to prepare for instruction. How would Fri., May 31 be used in Draft #3? Make-up days?

In looking at Draft 2, is there a way to turn December 21st into a workday instead of January 2nd? It would be a lot easier to do report cards before the break than after. It would also be very helpful to have a workday at the end of the third marking period. Maybe we could turn a couple half days into full days and others into work days?

I think that it is strange that all of this is coming out after school is over and many are away from their computers for the summer. I think it is appalling that these calendars have been put out with no explanation as to why the school board is trying to change the start date to an earlier time in August. Why is it that many schools in northern Virginia are able to start late and still have exams done before Winter Break and Albemarle County can't seem to reconcile that. Also, is it really necessary for us to be out until January 9th in one of the options? There are too many long breaks for my liking, you are worried about retention of info over winter break for exams but you have long breaks elsewhere in the year. All have problems!

The short winter breaks in drafts 2+3 are a big concern. Also, in draft 1, the winter break is excessively long. Professional development days are not appropriately placed at the end of a long holiday in draft 1. I like the early dismissal days coming at the end of the marking periods. The best calendar would be a mix of the 3 drafts.

I am a teacher. We need 5 work days before students arrive to prepare the classroom and plan as a team, so Draft 1 is not good. Draft 2 is the best, but would be better with a longer Winter break and a holiday on the Wed. before Thanksgiving; the kids need to have some real breaks so that they can return refreshed. We could end the year later in May to make this work. Whenever possible, we need time at the end of each quarter for report cards and planning. The half days followed by the planning day should work well! Thanks for asking us for input!

I like the idea of gradually changing our starting day each year. For example, next year using Draft 2 and then the following year using a calendar comparable to Draft 1. As a teacher in the county I desperately need the summer break to reflect, refresh and prepare for the following year. I always engage in some sort of prof development. I want to yearn to be back in my classroom. I think the children get spring fever and ending the year earlier makes sense. On a personal note I'd love to have time off from work to enjoy outdoor activities earlier in late spring/early summer and to be able to take advantage of lower rates for rentals etc. I teach in the elementary grades so do not feel I should speak to exam schedule

First day of school should begin on Wed. August 15th. Wed. November 21st should be a holiday not a half day. Friday Dec. 21st should be a holiday. Half school days with the exception of the last day of school are a waste of time as they are not academically productive on the elementary level and a waste of money in terms of bus transportation cost. Half days before holidays will result in a large number of absences. Thank you.

Current schedule allows students (who need or want) to study over Christmas break and then to take advantage of the review period prior to the exam. The earlier starts will cut down on students' earning ability since they would not be available for the "summer season" - they would be "out of sync with job schedules. The earlier starts will be more costly since the buildings would have to be air conditioned for more days during the hottest time of the year. Students would have to sit on hot buses during more extremely hot days during the month of August if the early start is enacted. Families would not be available to participate in valuable summer cultural programs throughout the country that have set summer seasons.

I think the grading period should end before kids take a long long holiday break and forget the information they will be tested on toward the end of the semester.

Keep Spring Break in April

As a teacher I cherish the two weeks off at winter break as it gives me enough time to visit with family and friends as well as have down time and prep for the upcoming grind of SOLs. One week is simply not enough time. No matter what the start date is I would request that the two weeks for winter break be maintained. As a teacher the only other concern/request I would have is to make sure there is at least one work day at the end of each quarter to use for report cards. In all reality most teachers end up planning and reorganizing their rooms on that day and don't even get to report cards, but it is a necessity so that we are not spending even more non-contract hours on these things.

The earlier school starts up, the earlier I start back in the summer. An earlier end date doesn't help me spend time with my kids since they are with their dad for the 'summer'. I 'need' some down time with my own kids in order to be able to give back to other people's kids.

Informing universities of the public school schedule change so teachers are still able to take classes.

Although I am not particularly fond of the early start--does not leave much time to wind down during that one summer, I do like the clustered professional development days. I also like the 3 days at Thanksgiving--I travel to be with family and 1/2 day Wednesday does not allow me to get a flight until Thanksgiving morning. I also like 2 weeks for winter break as it also gives time to celebrate and relax.

I don't understand the inconsistencies between the August 8th start date and the August 13th with regards to teacher work days and holidays. We start 3 days earlier (work days) for the 8th, yet a lot more is "taken away" if we start on the 13th. I, and others I talked to, believe you could tweak the 13th calendar to look a lot more like the 8th start date. Also, the big question is are you going to really listen to suggestions, concerns, etc. or has the decision already been made? Not to sound pessimistic, but this is how the county is known to do things, at times. Please listen to suggestions made by teachers and parents. If you really want to start earlier, there could be tweaking to the 13th date to make that much better.

We have had the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as part of the holiday. Why is it now a half day?

After winter break, students' concentration diminishes quickly and ending the school year earlier is a great idea. Discipline increases the longer the school year is drug out. Having the summer break start earlier would help with that greatly and I feel it would also improve test scores.

I am confused as to why there is such a heavy half day usage for Draft 2 and 3. Is truly seems fiscally irresponsible to be using resources across the county for a half day of school. After viewing the three drafts, one would almost assume that families and employees are being "forced" into choosing Draft 1 because of the holiday time that is available and lack of half days. I'm sure that is not what is happening, but it does give that appearance.

Calendar Comments from Nancy Bowen (high school teacher) Draft 1 I really dislike the idea of starting school on August 6. I am very concerned that teachers have one day to do grading and submit grades right before winter break on December 21. I think I would omit one of the October work days (October 12) and start the new quarter on October 12 instead. I would then make December 20 a workday. Teachers need time at the end of the semester to tidy up all of their grades. Draft 2 I really dislike all of the half days. I think it makes it hard for parents of younger children to plan child care. And I think sometimes parents of high school students and high school students think that half days are good days to take

First week of August is too early. August is still a time for families to travel out of town.

It is ideal for the community to have the calendar match with the city schools. This also helps with staff development which is shared with the two localities. I am concerned that this schedule change is based on the 4 X 4 schedule change which was a rush decision. Research has shown that students do better when core class are held every other day not every day which is what happens during the 4 X 4 schedule. Monticello High School has more semester classes than Western or Albemarle. Why are we changing the calendar for a whole district for a small number of students. Can the public be shown the number of students who are taking core classes by semester as opposed to year long. Don't change the semester break keep it after Christmas.

Draft two appears to be the move with the least amount of impact to teachers and students.

I thought it was decided, (written in stone), that Spring Break would be the first full week of April. It is not on any of these three calendars. Could that be because Easter that year is on Sunday March 31st and heaven forbid someone accuse you of planning Spring break anywhere near Easter?

think I would have to go with the Draft 1 even though I do not like the early start. I do think it important to keep 3 days at Thanksgiving and 2 weeks at Christmas. I also like the staff development days put together so that there is chance to actually complete some discussions.

In the long run, I believe that Draft 1 will be the best for students, parents and employees.

Like having two weeks for winter break and liked finishing the 2nd quarter before winter break

I really love option 2 as a teacher. Having the semester end before leaving on Christmas break just makes good sense. I also like having a slightly shorter winter break in order to get out so early on May. I'm excited at the possibilities presented by this calendar!

Draft #1: Could we start back to school after winter break on Jan. 7th and put the two professional teacher work days on May 23 & 24th. This would allow students to be done on May 22 instead of May 24th... Draft #3: Why is do we have the last two professional teacher work days on June 3 & 4 instead of July 31st and June 3rd? Why is there a difference in professional teacher days in each calendar? One calendar has 8 the other has 9 and draft 3 has 10.

Draft 3 is by far the best option! Spring Break and the start of school are both way too early in option 1 and 2.

I think spring break should be in April and we should go 1/2 days on Fridays

Draft 1 represents a calendar in the best interest of student learning, our primary purpose as educators in Albemarle County. Draft 1 has the same number of school days as we've ever had, just shifted forward. Concerns about the ability to find childcare for the end of May/beginning of June seem silly as an individual or business who provides such care will inevitably adjust their practices in response to the ACPs calendar change. This calendar change is critical and should be adopted immediately.

Draft 1- just starts way too early!! Draft 2- I like the start and end dates. I don't mind 1/2 days as a teacher but I think parents may complain about them Draft 3- similar to what we've been doing

Very good plan in every draft to end the school year shortly after SOLs. Be sure to allow time for end-of-year field trips after testing is completed. Would be ideal if the semester could end before the end of the calendar year (in December) without compromising the month of August. Would really love to start after Labor Day!

Since we are committed to starting prior to labor day, it makes sense to go ahead and even up the semesters with a break in between with options one or two. Further, teachers would have more time on both these options to prepare students for the AP exams. If we are not planning to make the semesters even, let's go back to starting after Labor Day.

It saddens me there was no mention on starting after Labor Day as we used to and still out by June 4th. It concerns me on behalf of the students and bus drivers that have to drive them concerning the heat and the students that get sick due to that heat on the buses. We have students that cannot tolerate the heat because their bodies are used to the air conditioning all the time. They get on our buses and end up getting sick from the heat. The buses that do have air conditioning do not work well at all. It was not a good investment for the county when they tried ac on the buses. Do not work well, still have to use the windows and when the bus is broke down and not moving that creates an even more heated situation. Real concern with the heat.

Survey Title: 2012-13 Calendar Development Survey
Report Type: Conditional
Start Date: 30-Jun-11
End Date: 11-Jul-11
Completed Responses: 2840
Filtered Responses: 97

Conditions Applied

Q1. What is your relationship to Albemarle County Public Schools? is **Community Member**

Q2. Please rank the three draft calendars in order of your preference, with "Rank 1" being your first choice, and "Rank 3" being your third choice.			
Responses	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Draft 1 - Aug. 8 Start	16	7	74
Draft 2 - Aug. 13 Start	16	80	1
Draft 3 - Aug. 22 Start	65	10	22
Total Responses	97		

Q3. Other input or considerations:
August is typically a very hot, humid, uncomfortable month. I would think it would be costly and difficult to create a comfortable environment for learning during the early weeks of the month. Many people go on vacations during August. I guess I would like to know the reason for these adjustments.
I am a parent of 2 AHS graduates. As a teacher (in another district), I am concerned about the number of professional development days. Are these days also teacher work days, where teachers can work in their classrooms? Are you expecting teachers to set up and pack up their classrooms on their own time? Also why are there half days on Nov. 21 and Dec. 21.....makes more sense to have a full day before Thanksgiving break for travel etc., than to have a half day before a weekend for the December break. I disagree with moving the school year further into the summer. Summer tourist season runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day? This will deter businesses from hiring students for the tourist season if they go back the beginning of August.
It seems best to have the semester end at winter break.
August 22 makes the most sense for all children and families.
It is too much to ask that people have not already made vacation plans for the first half of August. A later start is healthier for everyone; to open the schools for the fall term when summer is at its hottest is to rob everyone of the pleasures of summer. It's also an exceedingly bad economic decision as it will drastically reduce revenues from vacation-oriented businesses, many of which depend heavily on students for their seasonal work. That work is a valuable part of a student's education. Summer jobs build responsible citizens; kids need to learn work skills which translate into lifetime habits. Also, to have the schools close before the end of May is counter to common sense.

Since high school sports teams begin practices the first of August, summer is basically over for those families then. Why not go ahead and start classes again? Personally, I like the idea of students being out before Memorial Day weekend too!

We usually travel in August, so it doesn't work out well for us if the school starts early

The long winter break would be wonderful, for teachers and students !!!

As a previous Student from another School system that used a very similar schedule to Draft 1, I would completely support this. I was a Child with Divorced parents and looking at the Days off schedule in addition to the Summer Schedule, this would easily work with what Parents typically do. Draft 1 and 2 are on the right direction that the school system needs to consider. Draft 3 is almost exactly what is in place now and continues to be a burden with the school days going so late into June due to extreme weather.

I like the idea of starting earlier and having a longer break at Christmas.

School starts too early in August. It should start closer to Labor Day,

Camps, family vacations, parental schedules

I vote for "none of the above." School should not start before Labor Day, especially in a jurisdiction that can't provide 100% air conditioned classrooms and buses, and should never end the same week as Memorial Day. Run the calendar the same way the vastly superior school districts in Northern Virginia run it -- according to the traditional American post-Labor Day start codified by the legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Does the county actually seek to continue its decline to the levels of the other nearby rural counties that start unreasonably early, and continue to lose ground in rankings versus the NOVA districts? Why embrace inferiority in this way? You will only drive the better students to private alternatives.

Some of our children go to private school and these new changes would mean that there would be a 3 week period where our children would miss summer vacation together. It will make it very difficult to have some of our children get out of school in May and others in June and then some go back to school the beginning of August and some the end of August. The schedule has been similar for years and I don't see why things need to be changed. I would be very upset if these changes are made.

The idea of being finished with first semester before Winter break is great! It makes sense on many levels. Students won't have forgotten their material for exams over the break, and schools with 4X4 schedules can get their SOLs finished before break as well.

Our parents pride themselves on being able to go to school after Labor day and getting out for summer by Memorial Day. Seeing as these adults are in charge now, and are perfectly capable human beings, I see no reason to make the future generation suffer in school any longer than their parents had to. It is ridiculous to assume that any child will learn more by cutting down on their free time in the Summer. If anything cutting their summer short will just mean they will be more boisterous and distracted. Give kids a reason to want to be in school. Don't give them a reason to dread it.

The earlier dates would put hardships on families who have commitments in early summer for events such as swim team, which go through the last weekend in July.

The earlier date interferes with too many families work schedule. It would be best if the City, county and University were all on the same schedule.

Kids should not be in school in August.

Starting school before Aug. 22 is a bad idea; it is still hot, and for the elementary school children who still have precious recess time, it can be uncomfortable; Aug is still a good vacation month for families and some chance of reduced rental rates at the beaches. When school is dismissed in May, the weather is not that hot; going to the beach in June, often means the water is not yet warm. Students may seem restless by the end of the school year, but this is often the case, even if you kept backing up the start of school to July. Starting on Aug. 22 may give better job options to HS students. Please ask the Daily Progress to do an article on why you would consider starting before Aug. 22.

Consider the costs of cooling the buildings with such an early start date. Also -- how many days might be lost anyway if children have to be dismissed because of heat-related issues?

JSL swim championships and subsequent family vacations for those involved would be highly inconvenienced by an earlier start date

All three of these are unacceptable. Why must you shorten winter break on the two calendar options starting later?? The later two are more palatable but really, starting at the very beginning of August??? Are you kidding???? You all need to go back to the drawing board and reconsider. Also, is the City also planning to change start dates? It is IMPERATIVE for my family that we be on the same schedule as I imagine it is for many others.

There are many benefits to the European system of longer holidays and even 1/2 day Wednesdays.....but school virtually year-round.

We live in a popular tourist destination area and many employers need student workers through August. Also, most summer events do not start until July 4th and conclude with Labor Day weekend. Scheduling school Early in August becomes a struggle for employers, students and families. Let's continue to give our community a true summer.

There is no reason to begin school this early. I also did not want to have to rank all 3 choices as there are no good 2nd or 3rd choices.

I cannot understand why you want to start school earlier and earlier in August. It is unbearably hot and kids should be able to swim and play in the summer. Why not return to the tried and true start of school AFTER Labor Day and conclude the year in early June. Why are there all these non-sensical "breaks"? Does UVA rule the world or are the Albemarle County Schools allowed to have an original thought and manage their own business and scheduling? Why was there not another choice allowed me so I could select something else that expressed my dissatisfaction with the proposed calendar plans. I frankly think all three options are the wrong choice. Thank you for your attention to the opinions of your tax-paying citizens.

I feel very strongly that it is a mistake to start the school year earlier than it already does. It would be more effective to gather survey information if the rationale for any changes was made clear.

Prefer late opening. What ever happened to after Labor Day to Memorial Day????

Makes sense to change schedule to mirror the SOL tests. Most everyone understands that nothing of real value gets taught to the students after the last SOL tests are finished. Fluvanna & Louisa have already made the change. Why be the last system to convert?

This early start date will impact the sales for all industries around c'ville.

August 8 and 13 will seriously disrupt family schedules.

I think 8/8 and 8/13 are ridiculously early.

Half days are a waste of time. Wednesday before Thanksgiving is when we all travel. Christmas vacation starting on Christmas eve is too late! Spring break needs to be later for us to enjoy the break in VA or NC. My family and all of my neighbors go on vacation the first two weeks in August due to the Jefferson Swim League. This won't change due to school calendars.

It is most important that the city and county have the same calendar, particularly the starting time in August! There is no need to start school any sooner than it does now! Many families plan their vacations during those first few weeks in August. I do not see why children in Albemarle County even have to start before Labor Day! Many localities in Virginia have their students start after Labor day!

Draft 3 maximizes family vacation time possibilities and the others offer no advantages as I can see for the earlier August start ups. Weather is relatively pleasant in early June and not so in early August. More AC needed in schools if earlier August calendar adopted. Harder on student athletes...etc...I would actually prefer a calendar which begins after Labor Day like is done in many school divisions and ends June 7th...with shorter breaks during school year...or fewer teacher work days.

Personally, I think those poor children should start back AFTER Labor day! What is wrong with you people?! I am so sick of this political correctness also, I notice there is NO vacation time scheduled around one of the most Christian holidays of the year - Easter! Please!!

All make-up days need to be scheduled BEFORE SOLs, not tacked onto the end.

BUT START SCHOOL ON THE 15TH NOT 13TH, NO HALF DAYS DURING THE YEAR BUT THE LAST DAY, ONLY 3 FULL DAYS FOR THANKSGIVING

August 8th and 13th are too early to start school. Many camps are still in session until mid-August, and many individuals (especially those who work on the "medical calendar" of July 1st to June 30th, need to be with the new residents/medical students in July, therefore, can only take a summer vacation/holiday in August. If school starts that early in August, the family vacation will not be able to take place. Lastly, if a child plays on a fall sport team, practices may then therefore need to start even earlier than August 8th, so they would be ready by the beginning of school. Overall, a bad idea to start school this early in the middle of the summer.

Draft 2 gives teachers plenty of opportunity to plan their classes before school. Having classes end in December before winter break also prevents students from forgetting what they have learned before end of semester exams. It also doesn't make much sense to have winter break go on for so long into January. Nor does it make much sense to have so many half days so randomly spread out throughout the year.

This better aligns the school with the university and summer-related activities and businesses.

HS exams prior to winter holiday break. more instruction time prior to SOLs and less "down" time afterwards...Aug 8th start time-the best for instructional purposes

Spring break in April

Option 1 has an almost 3 week winter break, which I feel is totally unnecessary. Option 2 has too many half days, which make it very difficult for working parents. Option 3 is very similar to the present calendar and previous years. There is really only 1 choice to vote on, as option 1 and 2 are totally out of the question. I hope you take into account this survey and THEN publicize the results so the public and the employees will know what the feelings were. Then open up meetings for discussion and feedback. I feel, however, that the decision has already been made and this has just been an exercise in futility. I hope I am wrong.

This allows for better quality family time during the summer and better chance of taking a vacation in the summer and not going in the heat of August days with the heat on the buses.