



INSTRUCTION: Schedules

School Calendar

I. Purpose

To establish guidelines for the development and adoption of a school calendar for the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) for each school year.

II. Definitions

- A. *School Holiday* – A holiday that is recognized by state law as a public school holiday.
- B. *Religious Holiday* – A day or days noted on the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) student testing calendar when state primary test administrations cannot be scheduled.

III. Calendar Committee

- A. Annually, the Superintendent will convene a calendar committee to assist in the development of a proposed school calendar. The appointment of such committee shall be made no later than 16 months prior to the school year for which the committee is making the calendar recommendation.
- B. Composition
  - 1. The Superintendent will designate a facilitator to conduct meetings and report on the work of the calendar committee.
  - 2. The committee shall be comprised of principals, office heads and representatives from the collective bargaining units and the Board of Education of Baltimore County's (Board's) stakeholder and advisory groups.

IV. Guidelines

- A. School Year
  - 1. The school year will be divided into two grading terms (semesters) that include at least 90 days each.
  - 2. A semester shall consist of two quarters of approximately equal length of between 42 to 48 days.

3. State law requires that schools be kept open for not less than 180 student days and a minimum of 1,080 student hours for elementary and middle schools and 1,170 student hours for high schools during a 10-month period in each school year.
4. The length of the work year for teachers shall be negotiated with the Teacher's Association of Baltimore County (TABCO).

B. Assessments

1. The school year calendar shall be aligned with federal, state and BCPS assessments.
2. No testing or assessments should be scheduled on a religious holiday, unless doing so would conflict with state or federal assessment requirements.

C. Professional Development

1. The calendar shall incorporate time to meet the professional development needs of the system and its employees.
2. Where appropriate, the calendar committee shall consider designating Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha as a professional development day.

D. Holidays

1. In accordance with state law, the following days are public school holidays:
  - a. Thanksgiving Day and the day after;
  - b. Christmas Eve and from then through January 1;
  - c. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;
  - d. Presidents' Day;
  - e. The Friday before Easter and from then through the Monday after Easter;
  - f. Memorial Day; and
  - g. Primary and general election days.
2. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, and the Board has the authority to designate and determine whether schools may be closed at any other time.
3. For informational purposes, the two major Muslim holidays, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, will be added to the school calendar with a notation that, whenever feasible, no locally mandated testing or field trips should take place on those dates.

E. Inclement Weather

The calendar shall include no fewer than 7 days set aside for school closures due to inclement weather or such other conditions as may require the closure of schools.

F. Parent-Teacher Conferences

The calendar shall establish dates for parent-teacher conferences.

V. Approval

A. The Superintendent will present a proposed school calendar to the Board for its consideration no later than the first regular Board meeting in October.

B. The calendar will be adopted annually by the Board no later than its November public meeting and amended, if necessary, as determined by the Board.

C. The approved school calendar will be posted on the school system's Web site.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §7-103, Required School Days and Holidays*  
COMAR 13A.02.01.04, *Length of the School Year*  
COMAR 13A.03.02.12(A), *Length of School Year*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 6304, *Commemorations and Observances*  
Board of Education Policy 6500, *Research and Assessment*

Rule		Superintendent of Schools
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