

WA State Board of Education (SBE) Public Comment 5/9/18

Consider the following: respectfully composed and submitted by Phyllis Bunker Frank, National Association for Year Round Education (NAYRE) board member, former Yakima school board member, former SBE member and retired speech/language pathologist.

This testimony advocates for SBE members with staff support discuss to consensus

1. SBE members consider organized study to develop a recognition policy statement that inaugurates a statewide ideological shift from a 19th C traditional school calendar year that plans for loss to a 21st C continuous, personalized calendar year that integrates compulsory and supplemental learning experience along with recognizing valued vacation time?
2. Development of a recognition policy statement as relates to equity, efficiency, and efficacy could provide a platform to prompt local school calendar year discussion that may lead to local intentional school/district review and a school calendar year that more closely matches school district and state vision and mission statements for all students.

Points to Consider:

1. The US is the only industrialized nation where districts annually plan to disconnect from students for 11 - 12 full weeks, depending on whether a pre or post - Labor Day school start date.
2. Longitudinal research documents measurable, observable, cumulative summer learning loss for all students, but is most apparent among economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and special education students.
3. The traditional school calendar year plans for summer learning loss or slide, education stagnation, and potential professional amnesia upon returning for school start up.
4. Compulsory school attendance (180 days or roughly equivalent in hours) for all students is firmly in place for K-12 students in all WA state public school districts except those that have waivers of the requirement from the State Board of Education.
5. School time is where all students are required to attend, all parents/guardians required to send and teachers/administrators are expected to engage using best professional practice.
6. The school calendar year and summer are fraught with language and even song that is somewhat derogatory each to the other....."now you get to go have fun" or "schools out, schools out" or "ugh, it's time to go back to school"
7. Fortunately the Expanded Learning Opportunities Council (ELOC) was legislated three years ago to address expanded learning and community based organizations as well as the **school calendar year**. The ELOC members have generated three annual reports with findings regarding the school calendar year. Such findings are most evident in the 2016/17 Annual Report. The report recognizes measurable, observable, meaningful summer opportunities that contribute to continuous learning growth as well opportunities for supplementary learning during other "school out" periods.

8. A study question opportunity for SBE members may be **When it comes to learning, teaching, planning partnership and play, how much summer is enough? What 21th century integrated roles can school calendar year and summer school/community based enrichment programs offer?**
9. The traditional school calendar year framework plans for learning loss, parent and community partnership disconnect, and contributes to an inefficient, ineffective, and unequitable use of time as well as district financial resources.
10. The NAYRE focuses **on balancing the compulsory school attendance days around the year by shortening the summer break to 6-7 weeks and redistributing the remaining 5-6 weeks around the year, preferably at logical quarter or trimester endings. A similar schedule offers around the year vacation, intervention and enrichment opportunities to craft continuous personalized K-12 student growth as well final examinations prior to winter break and interim opportunity for test preparation.**
11. The NAYRE views supplementary programming such as that proposed by the ELOC within and outside the school as having the same potential to develop year-round offerings with some 2 -3 week scheduling as well as lengthier summer programming during what are called **Intersession** breaks, with summer being one of three between school session periods to expand offerings.
12. Attention to school calendar year assessment should be integral to school and district school improvement planning as well as district budgeting. It is possible to calculate for 2 months summer learning loss as viewed through the necessity to allocate time to review, reteach, and re-model classroom practices while expecting grade level reading by third grade and reading to learn by fourth grade.
13. In light of your intensive work to develop and equity focus and policy as well as participate as a policy voice for Goal 5 Expanded Learning Opportunities of the current OSPI focus, consider a future SBE study session to elaborate on many of the points in this testimony.

THANK YOU.....Bunker

K-12 Not Just About Test Score Changing Any More

- Continuous, connected, personalized opportunity to learn
- Having a balanced presence in the lives of students to offset inequities and to present learning as lifetime practice
- Programs that are working for students have a chance of establishing new behaviors as evidenced in choices, determination, grit and other life skills
- Consistent, around the year mindfulness practices
- Calendar year balanced for metacognitive development to address growth in brain at optimum time and individual student need
- Practice making active choices about one's life path, possessing competencies to adapt to the demands of different contexts, and establishing an integrated identity of how to take charge of learning around the year.
- Whole Child/Whole Year** thought leadership – healthy, safe, engaged, supported, challenged
- Other.....many other.....

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