

## **2023-24 Calendar Options FAQs**

The Port Townsend School District is exploring how to allocate our 180 instructional days in 2023-24. This work is funded by Washington's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). In November, the school calendar working group presented ideas to the staff and shared a survey. Based on the results, the working group has created these FAQs.

### **Why do we want to make this change?**

- Continuous care, food, and socialization: About half of our students are experiencing poverty and over the summer may be missing nutritional services and connecting with other students.
- Reducing learning loss: Teachers typically have to re-teach at the beginning of the year. Shortening the summer can reduce learning recovery needs.
- Reducing Burnout: longer breaks during the year will help staff and students return with more energy.
- Options for Intervention: Instead of waiting until summer, breaks during the year can be used to prevent course failure and provide other interventions.

### **How short could the summer be?**

- In a balanced calendar, the summer break is never shorter than six weeks.
- In the past, PT Schools' summer break has been 11 weeks and 4 days. For next year, we will not propose a calendar with fewer than 9 weeks of summer break.

### **How would a shorter summer impact maintenance and facilities?**

- Restorative cleaning and detail work would have to be distributed more evenly throughout the year during longer breaks.
- Less time to perform larger scale contracted projects that require the facilities to be unoccupied and exterior work/projects during times of fair weather.

### **How will this impact athletics?**

- High school athletes are already accustomed to practicing over breaks. Transportation over breaks could become an issue. If so, vans and charter buses could be used.
- Starting school earlier will help middle school teams complete the number of practices required to engage in competition (in the past we've had to forfeit).
- Middle School athletics might be impacted by the Thanksgiving week break and the Presidents' week break as those fall right in the middle of boys' basketball season and coed wrestling season, respectively. In the past, middle school seasons have only had a max of 2 days off school during their particular sport.

### **Will staff be required to work intersessions (intervention/enrichment during February break)?**

- Participation in intersession will be voluntary. Like our current summer programs, intersessions may include community partners to provide staffing for enrichment.
- Intersessions may be funded by shortening the current 4-week summer programs and reallocating that money to school-year interventions that we predict would have higher attendance.
- All students interested in intersession are welcome to attend. Students needing intervention will be strongly encouraged to attend.

### **How might changing the calendar impact attendance?**

- Student attendance is historically 4-8% lower than the annual average during the weeks of Thanksgiving and President's Day (details [here](#)). Transitioning these days to vacation may improve attendance.
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### **How will the final decision be made?**

- The results of the student, staff, and community surveys will be shared with staff for their consideration.
- The working group will provide five calendar options for staff to rank. Results will be shared.
- PTEA & SEIU Executive Boards will consult with the Superintendent to make a final recommendation to the school board.
- The school board will approve the 2023-24 calendar in their April meeting.

- Set Approach to 1/10 Chimacum Staff meeting w/ Hornak
- Calendar Concepts for Staff to Rank and Key Alignment Areas
- Develop Student Survey Content and Launch/Timeline Plan
- Develop Community Survey Content and Launch/Timeline Plan
- Content to Inform Community
  - Social Media / Website / Other messaging
- Pre-planning for Steps with Union