



Memorandum

vancouver school board

DATE: February 1, 2017
TO: Education and Services Committee 3
FROM: Magdalena Kassis, Director of Instruction
RE: **Local School Calendar 2017-18**

Item 1

INTRODUCTION:

This report will provide an overview of the recommended dates for non-instructional days for 2017-18.

This report will further provide a recommendation of an amendment to the previously approved dates for Winter Break 2017-18.

This report will also provide a summary and outline of the consultation process with staff, parents and students and a review of the School Act calendar requirements.

This report contains two (2) recommendations.

Connection to the VBE Strategic Plan:

Goal 3: Create a culture of care and shared social responsibility

Objective: Support collaborative relationships with community partners that enhance student learning and well-being

BACKGROUND:

School Act Requirements:

The following are a summary of the School Act (Section 87) requirements around School District Calendar:

- *(5) A board must submit to the Minister a school calendar prepared under subsection (2) at least 3 months before the expiration of the current school calendar unless the board has made available to the public a school calendar under subsection (9) for the next school calendar year.*

- *(7) Before submitting a school calendar or school calendars, as applicable, under subsection (5) or (6), the board must, in accordance with the regulations of the Minister, consult with parents of the students enrolled in the school and representatives of employees of the board assigned to the school.*
- *(6-1) For the purposes of section 87.02 [school calendar — amendment] of the Act, a board must make publicly available proposed amendments to a school calendar at least one month before making the amendments.*

At the Board Meeting of March 7th 2016, the Board approved multi-year school calendars for 2017-18 and 2018-19. These calendars included the dates for the major school holidays of Winter Vacation and Spring Break for each of those years, as well as 5 “not in session” days – attached to Spring Break and the May long weekend. It was agreed that the non-instructional days for 2017-18 would be decided on during the 2016-17 school year.

Placement of Non-Instructional Days

The committee worked to ensure that days were evenly spread out throughout the school year, and that there was an even distribution of 4 day weeks and 5 day weeks for students, so as to maximize teaching and learning opportunities. The committee ensured that the placement of non-instructional days never resulted in a 3-day week for students. The committee also looked to align non-instructional days as closely as possible with some of the major cultural holidays including Lunar New Year.

Fridays and Mondays were chosen (as was the model last year) so as to least disrupt student learning, and to provide consistency for families.

The Ministry of Education is also providing one (1) additional non-instructional day for the 2017-18 school year for the purpose of Curriculum Implementation, and one existing non-instructional day must be dedicated to Curriculum Implementation.

The proposed days are in accordance with the minimum hours of instruction as set out by the Ministry of Education.

The District Calendar committee has met twice (January 9 and January 24 2017) and is recommending the following non-instructional/professional days for 2017-18:

- Friday September 22 (Flexible Professional Day – schools can request to change)
- Friday October 20 (Provincial Professional Day)
- Friday November 10 (District Curriculum Implementation Day)
- Friday December 1 (District Professional Day)
- Monday January 29 (District Curriculum Implementation Day)
- Monday February 19 (District Professional Day)
- Friday April 27 (Flexible Professional Day – schools can request to change)

Recommendation to amend the Winter Break 2017-18

It was important for the District Calendar committee that the dates of our holidays aligned with those of our neighbouring districts, as many of our staff members are also parents in neighbouring districts. At the time of the board meeting of March 2016, the committee had full information about Spring Breaks of neighbouring districts, but information about Winter Break dates was not fully confirmed from all other districts.

The committee now has full confirmed detail from neighbouring districts and the currently approved Winter Break for 2017-18 does not align with that of our neighbouring districts. The currently approved Winter Break for Vancouver is from December 18, 2017 – January 1, 2018. The approved Winter Breaks for the following districts is for December 25 – January 5: Chilliwack, Burnaby, North Vancouver, Coquitlam, Surrey, Richmond, Delta, West Vancouver. A request was initiated by VSTA and VESTA through the District Calendar Committee that the currently approved calendar for 2017-18 be amended so that our Winter Break calendars align with other districts. All other stakeholder representatives at the committee (CUPE, IUOE, PASA, VEPVAP, VASSA, DPAC) were supportive of the request from VESTA and VSTA.

The primary reason for the request is that many of our staff members who work in schools are parents of school-aged children and live in other districts. The desire was for those staff members to be able to have their winter vacation consecutively with those of their children. As well, the committee recognized that many day camps and community activities would be set up to align with the holidays of neighbouring districts.

Note that the Committee has confirmed that the previously approved dates for the 2018-19 Spring Break and Winter Break fully align with our neighbouring districts, so we do not anticipate this being an issue in future years.

Initial Parent Feedback from the proposal:

Once the committee knew of the proposed amendment, the potential change was communicated to school communities through the principal, with an explanation that it would be a recommendation to the Board and that the final information would be communicated to schools as soon as possible. The information about the proposed change was also posted on the VSB website.

Email communication has been received from parents and to date has been mixed. Some families are concerned about the proposed change as they have already secured their vacation time through work and some have already booked travel based on the originally approved dates. Other families have expressed appreciation of the alignment and are supportive.

All the Stakeholder representatives on the District Calendar committee are aware of the feedback received to date and request that the proposal to amend the Winter Break to align with neighbouring districts be presented to the Board.

Timeline:

- January 9: Meeting of the District Calendar Committee (stakeholder consultation)
- January 11: Proposed change of Winter Break dates posted to VSB website
Messaging sent to parents about proposed change through Principals
- January 24: Meeting of the District Calendar Committee (stakeholder consultation)
- February 1: Calendar Report presented to Committee 3

- February 27: Calendar recommendation(s) will be taken to the Board

- March 31: Final Approved Calendar(s) must be submitted to the Ministry

In order to meet the legislated deadlines, the Board meeting required for calendar approval needs to occur before the March 31st deadline.

There was consensus among the district calendar committee that they would like the final calendar to be approved and made public before families leave for Spring Break this school year if possible.

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND SUMMARY:

Consultation regulation:

Section 87.01 (7) of the School Act requires consultation on school calendars and the School Calendar Regulation sets out the parameters for that consultation. A board must make public a proposed school calendar one month before submitting it to the Ministry. For the 2017-18 calendar submission cycle, proposed calendars must be made public on or before February 29th 2016. During the consultation period, a board must provide parents and board employees the opportunity to comment on the proposed calendar.

The dates for Spring Break and Winter Break for the 2017-18 school year were made public in the Spring of 2016.

Consultation process:

As per the School Act requirement, there has been consultation with stakeholders around the calendar for 2017-18. This has been done through the ***District Calendar Committee***. The committee met on January 9th and 24th and included representatives from each of the following stakeholder groups and was facilitated by Magdalena Kassis (Director of Instruction):

- DPAC
- VESTA
- VSTA
- VEPVPA
- VASSA
- IUOE
- CUPE
- PASA

Although a student representative was not able to attend the meeting, District Student Council input was sought and received from them via email.

The draft 2017-18 non-instructional dates were discussed at the January 9th meeting of the Calendar Committee. Following this meeting, those dates were circulated to stakeholder groups via their committee representatives, in order to gather broad stakeholder feedback. Feedback received by committee representatives was discussed on January 24th and resulted in the development of the proposed non-instructional days included within this report.

The proposal from VESTA and VSTA to amend the Winter Break dates was discussed at the January 9th meeting of the Calendar Committee and was supported by the other Stakeholder representatives on the committee. Following this meeting, that proposed amendment was circulated to stakeholder groups via their committee representatives, and to parents via Principals. Feedback from parents has been received about the proposed amendment.

CONCLUSION:

After consultation among stakeholders, dates for non-instructional days for 2017-18 are proposed.

After consultation among stakeholders, an amendment to the Winter Break for 2017-18 is being recommended.

We will now continue a process of consulting and gaining feedback from parents before recommending the non-instructional days and the amendment to Winter Break for approval from the Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Board approve the proposed Non-Instructional Days for the 2017-18 calendar as proposed by the District Calendar Committee.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Board approve the amendment to the Winter Break dates for the 2017-18 calendar as proposed by the District Calendar Committee, to align with those dates of neighbouring districts.

Currently approved dates for 2017-18 School Year

(approved at the Board meeting of March 7, 2016)

First day of school:

Tuesday September 5th

Last Day of school:

Thursday June 28th

Winter Vacation:

December 18th – January 1 (return to school on Tuesday January 2)

Spring Break (includes 4 days “not in session”:

March 19 – April 2 (includes Easter holidays)

Statutory Holidays:

Monday October 9th Thanksgiving

Monday November 13th Remembrance Day

Monday February 12th Family Day

Friday March 30th Good Friday (during Spring Break if 2 week option)

Monday April 2nd Easter Monday (attached to Spring Break if 2 week option)

Monday May 21st Victoria Day

Additional day not in session (5th day not in session):

Friday May 18th

2017 - 2018

DRAFT

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LEGEND

- Statutory Holiday
- Non-Instructional Days (7 days)
- School Vacation
- School Not in Session (5 days)
- Days of Instruction
- September 05 - First Day of School
- September 22 - Non-Instructional Day (Flexible)
- October 09 - Thanksgiving Day
- October 20 - District Wide Non-Instructional Day
- November 10 - Curriculum Implementation Day
- November 13 - Remembrance Day (in lieu of Nov 11)
- December 01 - District Wide Non-Instructional Day
- December 25 - Christmas Day
- December 26 - Boxing Day
- December 27 - January 05 - Proposed Winter Break
- January 08 - School Reopens
- January 29 - Curriculum Implementation Day
- February 12 - Family Day
- February 19 - District Wide Non-Instructional Day
- March 19 - 23 - Spring Break
- March 26 - 29 - School Not in Session
- March 30 - Good Friday
- April 02 - Easter Monday
- April 27 - Non-Instructional Day (Flexible)
- May 18 - School Not in Session
- May 21 - Victoria Day
- June 29 - Administrative Day
- Days in Session = 187
- Days of Instruction = 179
- Non-Instructional Days = 7 days
- Administrative Day = 1
- Hours of Instruction Per Year:
- Kindergarten = TBA
- Grades 1-7 = TBA
- Secondary = TBA