



### Let It Snow

The recent snow was beautiful and got us all in the holiday spirit. It is always fun to build a snowman, go sledding, and cuddle up with some hot cocoa! 12+ inches of snow, however, kept the fun around a little longer than everyone expected. Schools remained closed for a solid week in all areas of the county and many areas across the state. Though city and county workers and school personnel worked diligently and heroically, getting to school remained treacherous for walkers, drivers, buses and personnel. Closing is a tough decision. Also difficult is working to find ways to make up lost instructional time for students and work hours for employees. Here are some highlights from the North Carolina School Calendar Law (G.S. 115C-84.2) under which public schools operate:

- Start date no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 and end date no later than the Friday closest to June 11.
- Covers at least nine calendar months.
- Must have a minimum of 185 days **OR** 1,025 hours of instruction.
- Must have at least nine (9) teacher workdays.
- Have a minimum of ten (10) annual vacation leave days.
- Have the same or an equivalent number of legal holidays occurring within the school calendar as those designated by the State Personnel Commission for State employees.
- School shall not be held on Sunday.
- Veterans Day shall be a holiday for all public school personnel and for all students enrolled in the public schools.
- An issued State of Emergency does not change the statutory requirements for 185 instructional days or 1,025 instructional hours.
- 42 consecutive calendar days when teacher attendance is not required.

With all those restrictions and requirements, districts across the state are finding multiple and creative ways...not always popular ways... to make up time. Again, these are tough decisions and whatever decision is made will inevitably cause conflict and disagreement. One thing we can all come together on and all work toward is revising the state's calendar law. A revision to the law would not cost a dime and could provide benefits for local systems and boards making local decisions about what calendar works best for the students and communities they serve. Local calendars could provide more make up options and flexibility, high school exams before winter break, and consistency with our community college. The state representatives and the state senator who will represent Davidson County in 2019 are Rep. Larry Potts – District 81, Rep. Steve Jarvis – District 80, and Sen. Eddie Gallimore – District 33. These gentlemen will be sworn in January 9, but during the upcoming break, take a minute to contact them and share your concerns and solutions regarding school calendar flexibility. Most importantly, take some time to relax and enjoy the season. Who knows, maybe we will even get some more snow!

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