

# Summer school for everyone

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The United States no longer stands as the world's leader in education. America is falling behind.

In 2012, the Program for International Student Assessment compared fifteen year old students from sixty-five nations around the world. In this program, all students took the same standardized test in their own respective languages. American students did not make the top ten in any of the three subjects of math, science, and reading (Cover story). Given the resources in the United States, students' performance should fall much higher in comparison to competing countries. Our education system is outdated and changes must be made.

Perhaps the most glaring variable between the United States education system and other top scoring countries is summer break. This flaw in the American education system must be changed. School should be held year round because it will increase students' academic achievement. Students perform better academically when they do not have the opportunity to regress academically over summer break. Giving a student three consecutive months off not only stagnates a pupil's progress, but it actually reverses it. Research done by non profit research organization, RAND corporation, shows that " by the end of summer, students perform, on average, one month behind where they left off in the spring" (McCombs 13).

Because of this lost month, teachers must spend valuable class time reviewing material already covered. Students and teachers could instead devote this time to advancing students' educational careers and improving student achievement. Also, schools that make the switch to a year-round

calendar see significant growth in their students reading and writing. During the summer, the majority of students do not read as often as they do during the school year, if at all. Similar to an athlete who does not train in the offseason, when a reader does not work on his or her game, he will struggle to perform in the next season.

Beecher Community School District, an underprivileged public school in Michigan, recently made the switch to a year-long calendar and has experienced striking success. After only a two years, “ reading and writing scores in grades 3 through 6 doubled” and Joshua Talison, superintendent of the school, said, “ It’s the best thing we’ve ever done for my at risk population, and we’re seeing results” (Denisco). Additionally, students’ academic achievement will improve because they will perform more consistently throughout the year. Everyone knows how difficult it is to focus during the final months of school with three months of fun in the sun just around the corner. In year-round systems, students still get a substantial summer break, and their summer fun, without having to sacrifice their academic ability.

Although evidence points to year round school being a positive change for schools and the communities involved, there are still many who oppose the idea. Those against such a system argue that teachers enjoy their long summer breaks just as much as their students and will never fully support a school calendar without such a break. In schools that have switched, however, teachers have grown to appreciate the new schedule and most actually favor it. In 2011, a professor from Marymount University conducted a study on the effects of a modified school schedule in the community of <https://assignbuster.com/summer-school-for-everyone/>

Fairfax, Virginia. The study found that while students improved, as expected, teachers happiness and motivation also improved.

With more frequent breaks throughout the year, stress levels lowered and “burnout” among teachers decreased as well. One teacher from an elementary school in the community commented, “now, on the year-round education cycle, I get systematic breaks, the kids get breaks from me, and we’re ready to work together again.” While it may seem counterintuitive, teachers actually benefit from a schedule without a summer break, just as much as their students. Summer break is detrimental to students and their educational advancement. A year-round school calendar would eliminate regression, foster improvement, and promote consistency among students and teachers alike.

If the United States carelessly carries on without transition to year-round education, American student achievement will continue to suffer. The children of America will find themselves unprepared for the future and the United States may begin to fall behind in more than just education. Consequently, it is imperative that a year-long school system is implemented.