

The education solution

Business



Summer.

The long warm days of relaxing and not stressing over homework, tests, and sleep all make this 10 week break so desirable. While students are off enjoying themselves, they are also losing a significant amount of knowledge learned all throughout the past year. Much of this knowledge is needed to continue into the following year. Far too often teachers spend the first few weeks of school refreshing the memory of students and getting them readjusted to school. If students need to relearn what was taught the past year, then why do schools continue using the traditional schedule? A year round school schedule would significantly increase the retention of K-12 students and eliminate this problem.

Schools nationwide should adopt a year round school schedule. Year round education would undoubtedly increase test scores, help students of low income, and improve reading skills. Year round school schedules have been shown to produce higher scores of standardized testing. Many schools that have wisely adopted a year round schedule have seen a significant improvement in their standardized testing scores. For example, one high school that ran on the traditional school schedule was labeled a Priority School, standing at the bottom listing.

After transitioning to a year round schedule they “ increased their scores by 15 points, and are no longer in the bottom 5 percent listing.” (DeNisco). Achieving higher test scores gives a high school an appealing label and a higher level of recognition. In addition, retaining knowledge over a 10 week break poses an even greater challenge for children living in low income

families. The traditional school schedule of a 10 week summer puts students of low income families at a major disadvantage. During long summer breaks, students of low income families lose ground to students of middle class families.

Sociologists have found that deficiencies in a child's home life and their neighborhood resources most directly lead to summer learning loss. This results in the poor children's chance for academic achievement to get smaller and smaller. Paul von Hippel, an established statistician at Ohio State University, states, "by ninth grade, the achievement gap between poor and middle-class children is more than three times larger than it was at the start of first grade" (von Hippel 3). The last thing anyone wants is to put the disadvantaged at an even bigger disadvantage. Right? Finally, a year round school schedule has been shown to improve reading skills.

Primary schools that have transitioned to year round school often see significant increases in reading skills. For example, Hall Fletcher Elementary School, a primary school in North Carolina with 80% of its students on meal plans, saw their students' reading skills drop far less after a 4 week break compared to a traditional 10 week break. Just 6 weeks is making a difference in these children's' critical skills. It's clear that by adopting shorter breaks schools can minimize the amount of information their students forget.

Despite the surplus of benefits that come along with a year round schedule, many argue that switching to a year round schedule would be too expensive. There's no denying that making the switch would be costly.

The requirement of additional transportation, maintenance, and higher teacher salaries would all amp up the cost; however, once on a year round schedule, a school could actually fit more students through implementing a multitrack system. In a multitrack system students are placed on different tracks in which vacations are staggered so that all students are never at school at the same time. Therefore, having the ability to fit more students in a school would make the cost of switching to year round school less damaging. Implementing a year round school schedule is the smartest and most effective and the wisest thing any school could do. Though many savor that long, relaxful summer, it would truly be more beneficial in the long run to implement year round education. If schools want their students receiving the best education possible, then year round school is the way to go.