



Hickory Public Schools
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PRESS RELEASE

TO: All Area Media
FROM: Beverly E. Snowden, Public Information Officer
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SUBJECT: HPS Board Adopts Early Calendar
DATE: February 13, 2012

HPS Board Adopts Early Calendar

HICKORY... During the work session meeting of the Board of Education for Hickory Public Schools, held on Monday evening, February 13th, HPS board members voted unanimously to adopt the early start calendar for the 2012-2013 school year. The calendar is contingent upon approval of the system's waiver request as submitted to the State Board of Education.

If the State Board of Education approves a waiver for the early start and stop days, then Hickory Public Schools will start school for students on August 7, 2012 and end the school year for students on May 23, 2013. Teachers would return to school on August 2, 2012. These start and stop days correspond to those used by Catawba County Schools and Newton-Conover City Schools.

Several years ago, the NC Legislature, in response to the tourism industry, passed a law that prohibited any schools from starting before August 25. However, school systems that closed school for a significant number of days due to inclement weather, were recently provided the opportunity to apply to the State Board of Education for a waiver of the start and stop days for school calendars.

While the HPS Board of Education reviewed the potential concern of this calendar for families that might have scheduled late summer plans, the board's vote reflects the benefits of the early start calendar, which best serves the needs of students and educators:

- An early start calendar allows high school students to complete end-of-course exams prior to the Christmas break and creates a logical break between first and second semesters.
- An early start calendar facilitates students being able to participate in college and community college programs.
- An early start calendar also allows employees to be paid for nearly an entire month in August.
- The early start calendar will facilitate interested educators in being able to participate in university summer school courses that begin in late May/early June.
- The early calendar provides greater flexibility for make-up days.
- Finally, many high school students are already coming to school regularly in early August with the start of sports, band and clubs.

The early start calendar for 2012-2013, adopted by the HPS Board of Education, is contingent upon State Board approval of the waiver. Approval of the waiver is expected by May, 2012.

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