



**Committee of the Whole (PUBLIC)
Report No. 23-012**

7 February 2023

School Year Calendar: Key Dates

Key Contact: Brett Reynolds, Associate Director of Education

PURPOSE:

1. This report seeks approval of the recommended 2023-2024 elementary and secondary school year calendars for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

CONTEXT:

2. Provincial [regulation 304](#), *School Year Calendar*, governing the design and composition of school year calendars, requires that school boards submit their proposed calendars to the Ministry of Education for approval. Districts are required to have 194 instructional days per school year, up to seven of which may be designated as professional activity days. In addition, for secondary schools, up to ten instructional days can be designated as examination days. As per the recent amendments to O. Reg. 304, the deadline for submission of regular and modified school year calendars is **March 1, 2023**.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. Ministry Requirements for School Year Calendar:
Annually, the Ministry of Education releases a memorandum to school boards that references regulation 304 of the *Education Act* which requires school boards to submit proposed school year calendars to the Ministry for approval. The Ministry of Education provides a province-wide template to guide and direct local-level discussions about the design of the school year calendar. Key dates for the placement of holiday breaks (March Break/ Winter Holiday break) are initially identified by the Ministry of Education and provide a basis for preliminary planning in our District as we consider local priorities and program needs.

OCDSB School Year Calendar Submission Process:

The District's administrative procedure for school year calendars ([PR.526.SCO](#)) provides direction for consultation on the calendar through an ad hoc School Year Calendar Consultative Committee composed of representatives from the various employee groups, parent representatives (OCASC/PIC), school principals, students (Student Senate, Council of Co-Presidents), and various central departments from the District. An additional level of consultation takes place between the local English and French language school boards to ensure alignment of the holiday breaks with other districts. We have heard from families

that holiday alignment with the other school districts is important and it also enables community groups and the city to better plan for camps and other activities to take place during holiday breaks.

- a) Professional Activity Days:
Regulation 304 allows for a total of seven Professional Activity Days. Districts are required to make three of these professional activity days Ministry Priority days, the topics of which are established annually by the Ministry. In addition to these three required days, up to four additional days may be designated by the board as Professional Activity Days. The topics for these four days must take into consideration collective agreement requirements such as the two days for elementary schools relating to the development of report cards and the federation/association Professional Activity Day for elementary and secondary schools.

- b) Faith Days and Days of Observance: In creating the school year calendar for 2023-2024, a review of the faith days and days of observance occurred when determining the placement of all Professional Activity Days. Key dates of observance (often referred to as “starred” dates) are of particular significance to members of the Indigenous and major faith and creed based communities whom we serve. Events such as field trips, school concerts, conferences, meetings, workshops, other professional activity events, co-curricular activities, and exams/tests will not be scheduled on the identified starred dates.

Proposed 2023-2024 Calendar

The proposed school year calendar meets the requirements set out in regulation 304. The proposed calendar does align the winter and March breaks with the three coterminous school boards which is important for many of our stakeholders. All consultations have been undertaken in compliance with the relevant board procedure. As a result of this process, we are recommending the following elementary and secondary school year calendars for the 2023-2024 school year:

Recommended 2023-2024 School Year Calendar

| Elementary | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 1 September 2023 |
| First Day of School for students | 5 September 2023 |
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 6 October 2023 |
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 3 November 2023 |
| PA Day - Parent/Educator Interviews | 24 November 2023 |
| Winter Holiday Break | 25 December 2023 to 5 January 2024 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| PA Day - Report Card Development | 26 January 2024 |
| PA Day - District Priorities | 16 February 2024 |
| March Break | 11 March 2024 to 15 March 2024 |
| PA Day - Report Card Development | 7 June 2024 |
| Last Day of School for students | 27 June 2024 |

| Secondary | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 1 September 2023 |
| First Day of School for students | 5 September 2023 |
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 6 October 2023 |
| PA Day - Provincial Priorities | 24 November 2023 |
| Winter Holiday Break | 25 December 2023 to 5 January 2024 |
| Semester One Examinations | 24-30 January 2024 |
| PA Day - District Priorities | 31 January 2024 |
| March Break | 11 March 2024 to 15 March 2024 |
| PA Day - District Priorities | 16 February 2024 |
| Semester Two Examinations | 19-25 June 2024 |
| Last Day of School for students | 25 June 2024 |
| PA Day - District Priorities | 26, 27 June 2024 |

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- There are financial implications arising when the school year calendar is not fully aligned with our coterminous school board (OCSB), given that the shared transportation service is operating when one of the two school boards is not in session. Cost estimates range between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per day. The proposed calendar does align with our coterminous board's intended holiday breaks; however, they are yet to determine the dates of their professional activity days.

COMMUNICATION CONSULTATION ISSUES:

- Members of the ad hoc School Year Calendar Consultative Committee met on 22 December 2022 and 19 January 2023. These meetings reviewed key dates associated with the 2023-2024 calendar document identified in this report.

Information gathered during a previous consultation with parents/guardians was also used to inform this process. Multiple conversations took place with the coterminous board due to shared transportation. Additionally, representatives from neighbouring school districts within our community were consulted.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

6. In developing the recommended calendars careful consideration was given to how to best meet the needs of staff, students and their families, as well as the optimal placement of professional development days to support district priorities. In the proposed calendars, all three Provincial Priority professional activity days are scheduled before December 2023 and several are aligned between all elementary and secondary schools. This will be helpful to all staff from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in the area of supporting student achievement and well-being, and will be helpful for families who may have students in both panels. In doing so the proposed calendar does further foster the cultures of caring, innovation and social responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the recommended school year calendar as outlined in Report 23-012 be submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval as the official 2023-2024 school year calendar for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board's elementary and secondary schools.

Brett Reynolds
Associate Director of Education

Michele Giroux
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board