

BALANCED CALENDAR FAQ SHEET

- **What is a Balanced Calendar?** Students attend the same number of days (175) as the traditional calendar. In essence, the summer vacation days are redistributed throughout the year to create shorter, more frequent breaks. Students do not attend school 365 days without breaks.
- **What are Intersessions?** Intersessions are the optional 10-15 days of extended learning offered at BCS during the Fall and Spring breaks. Intersessions are staffed by teachers, support staff, administrators, and professionals in the community. Intersessions are designed for remediation and enrichment. We will strongly encourage students in need of remedial support to attend the intersession periods, but this will require teamwork to make this successful.
- **Will transportation be provided during Intersessions?** Transportation will be provided to students who normally ride the bus. Bus routes will be determined by the number of students registered for the intersession period.
- **Why does BCS want to change from a traditional calendar to a Balanced Calendar?** Student achievement information shows that too many of our students lose much of what was learned the previous school year. This forces teachers to spend 4 to 6 weeks reviewing content learned in the previous school year. We see that this pattern has a detrimental effect on student achievement in math as students move from grade to grade. A shorter summer break can significantly reduce the amount of content loss by students.
- **What is the cost for my child to attend the Intersession?** There is no cost.
- **Will meals be provided during Intersession?** Breakfast and lunch will be served during Intersession.
- **What if my child does not need remediation?** Intersessions include both remediation and enrichment classes for students. If your child does not need remediation, he/she may choose enrichment classes. In addition, high school students can prepare for the MME/ACT or complete credit recovery assignments.

- **What if I am enrolled in Grad Class during the month of August?** This issue will be resolved at the negotiations table, but we are sensitive to this issue. We are committed to helping staff earn advanced degrees.
- **How will intersession activities be funded?** Intersession activities will be largely funded by Title One. We are pursuing grants from several philanthropic organizations as well.
- **What about students with summer jobs?** The business community agrees that students' academic priorities outweigh the loss of work hours. Several business leaders are huge supporters of the school and go to great lengths to help our children. However, we don't believe that many of our students will be adversely effected by the Balanced Calendar. The vast majority of our students work after-school hours and weekends. Also, those students who participate in Fall sports have to reduce their work hours at the start of August to prepare for the Fall season.
- **How does the Balanced Calendar impact services provided by the ESD?** I have engaged in talks with the ESD Superintendent and Special Education Director about this issue. They have contacted other ISD leaders to see how they have worked through this issue. I will keep you updated as talks continue.
- **Dual Enrollment/CTE:** We will continue to provide transportation during the Intersession periods and pay for tuition, fees, and books for dual enrolled students. This is a modest price to pay to prepare our students for a bright future.
- **How will the Balanced Calendar impact Fall athletics?** The balanced calendar will require coaches to adjust their August practice schedules. Athletes will have to practice afterschool as opposed to practicing in the early part of the afternoon. During the Fall and Spring breaks, coaches can decide to hold practice in the early afternoon or afterschool. Games will be played as scheduled.

Balanced Calendar Myths

- **Myth:** Graduation will be later in the summer.
FACT: Graduation will be held at approximately the same time as it is currently, end of May or the first week of June.
- **Myth:** Our athletes will not be able to play/practice in August.
FACT: Athletes will start practicing/playing in August.
- **Myth:** Our students will not be able to attend CTE or WSCC.

FACT: Our students will be able to attend CTE and WSCC. If our school is not in session, they will follow the Tech Prep and WSCC schedules.

➤ **Myth:** Having a Balanced Calendar will be too costly for the school district.

FACT: The State of Michigan has passed a law to help school districts implement the Balanced Calendar. However, the district will and can absorb additional costs to support the Balanced Calendar model as well as pursue other funding sources.