

North Vancouver School District 2013/14 School Calendar Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Rationale

The *School Amendment Act* (Bill 36), enacted in spring 2012, establishes a new legislative framework for school calendars. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, there will be no standard school calendar and each board will need to establish calendars for schools in its district.

Sections 87.01 and 87.02 of the *School Act* and the new *School Calendar Regulation* set out the requirements for board-established school calendars. The *Regulation* also sets a minimum number of hours of instruction that boards must offer to students during the school year. It is important to note the *Regulation* is not intended to set or effect teacher hours of work.

Boards will be required to submit their calendars to the Ministry for review and may submit calendars for up to three (3) consecutive years at one time. Each school calendar should cover at least 12 consecutive months, and begin on the day following the end of the current school calendar. This means that 2013-14 school calendars will begin on July 1, 2013. Please note that there are different calendar information requirements for bricks-and-mortar and distributed learning schools:

- 1) All Public Schools, except Distributed Learning Schools
 - (a) The number and dates of the days in session;
 - (b) The number and dates of each day of instruction;
 - (c) The vacation periods and dates of statutory holidays;
 - (d) The dates of each non-instructional day; and
 - (e) The number of hours of instruction offered to students in each grade (per year). A minimum number of hours of instruction must be offered:
 - 853 hours of instruction for students in Kindergarten
 - 878 hours of instruction for students in Grades 1 to 7
 - 952 hours of instruction for students in Grades 8 to 12.

Note: The minimum hours requirement is lower for Kindergarten students to allow for the gradual entry process at the beginning of each school year.

- 2) Distributed Learning Schools
 - (a) The number and dates of the days in session;
 - (b) The dates on which the principal, vice principals, directors of instruction and teachers of the school are available for instruction; and
 - (c) The vacation periods and dates of statutory holidays.

Boards are not required to include their summer school schedules in calendars submitted to the ministry (s. 4 (3) of the *Regulation*).

Consultation

Section 87.01 (7) of the School Act requires consultation on school calendars and the *Regulation* sets out the parameters for that consultation. A board must make public a proposed school calendar one month before submitting it to the Ministry. For the 2013-14 calendar submission cycle, proposed calendars must be made public on or before February 28, 2013. During the consultation period, a board must provide parents and board employees the opportunity to comment on the proposed calendar.

The consultation requirement set by the *Regulation* is relatively minimal. Boards are encouraged to engage in broad public consultation in the months before the deadline for submission to the Ministry, particularly if contemplating significant changes from the previous year's calendar.

School Calendar Submission Forms

Boards will use one of two forms to submit their proposed calendars to the Ministry. The *School Calendar Form – General* applies to all public schools except distributed learning schools, and the *School Calendar Form – Distributed Learning* applies to distributed learning schools only.

These forms require specific information and are primarily intended for communicating with the Ministry. The calendar provided to parents and the school community will of course include more detailed information (e.g., school start and finish times) but must be consistent with the calendar submitted to the Ministry using these forms.

Boards are required to submit their 2013-14 school calendars by March 31, 2013.

Once a board submits a calendar, the Ministry will review it for compliance with the regulations. If a calendar is found to be non-compliant, the Ministry has 30 days from the date of receipt to amend the calendar.

School Calendar Amendments

A board has the ability to amend a calendar under s. 87.02 (1) of the Act and the *Regulation* sets the parameters for calendar amendments. At least one month before amending a calendar, a board must make the proposed amendments available to the public. The board must, within 30 days after amending the calendar, make the amended calendar public. Boards are required to provide the Ministry with the amended calendar using the applicable *School Calendar Form*.

Purpose of Committee

Steering Group Role

- Provide advice on the consultation process regarding the 2013-2014 School Calendar,
- Consider legislation, past feedback and other relevant information regarding school calendars,
- Identify perspectives, values and considerations associated with school calendars
- Review and consider consultation feedback
- Make recommendations to the Executive Committee and the Board of Education regarding the 2013-2014 School Calendar, and
- Participate in ongoing discussion and review for next two to three school calendars

Steering Group Responsibilities

- Attend Steering Group meetings on Dec 11, Jan 8, Jan 24 and Feb 12
- Represent the membership of your organization or constituency
- Attend all meetings
- Keep your constituency informed of SCSG discussions
- Strive to be inclusive of the array of perspectives within your constituency when participating in Steering Group discussions.

Expected Outcomes

- Recommendations regarding a school calendar for 2013-2014
- Recommendations for school calendars for subsequent two to three years

Steering Group Communications

- A meeting summary will be generated after each Steering Group meeting.
- A Final Steering Group Report will incorporate findings and recommendations for consideration by the Executive Committee and the Board of Education

Steering Group Timeline

- December 11 and January 8 - Steering Group meetings
- January 24 - Representative Partner Group discussions
- February 12 – Steering Group meeting
- February 19 - Board Meeting to discuss School Calendar
- February 20 – March 3 - Public Survey of options for 2013-2014 Calendar
- March 6 - Final School Calendar Steering Group Meeting to consider survey results and confirm recommendations to Executive Committee and the Board of Education

Meeting #1 DRAFT Objectives – December 11, 2012

- To provide a context for the School Calendar Steering Group
- To confirm School Calendar Steering Group roles, responsibilities, expected outcomes and process timeline
- To provide an overview of relevant legislation, history and considerations related to the school calendar
- To solicit Steering Group member perspectives and values regarding the school calendar
- To clarify next steps including additional information needs, homework and subsequent meetings

Meeting #2 DRAFT Objectives – January 8, 2013

- To confirm the objectives and process for the January 24, 2013 meeting (e.g., similar to graduation dialogue)
- To theme Steering Group member perspectives, values and considerations regarding the school calendar for discussion at the January 24 meeting
- To confirm key questions for January 24 meeting
- To clarify next steps including additional information needs, homework and subsequent meetings

Representative Partner Group Meeting DRAFT Objectives – January 24, 2013

- To solicit partner group perspectives and values regarding the school calendar

Meeting #3 DRAFT Objectives – February 12, 2013

- To review and receive feedback from January 24 partner group discussion
- To review proposed model calendar(s)
- To review February 20 to March 3 public survey questions

Historical

2003 for 03/04

The Standard School Calendar was first reviewed at public forum meetings held in 2003. The notion of a two-week Spring Break was the most common area of interest for discussion; however, the necessary amendment required under legislation for changing the Standard School Calendar, was not pursued after a lack of consistent support from the partner groups for making such a change.

2004 for 04/05

The Standard School Calendar was reviewed ('04) and adjusted for the 2004-2005 school year. This review was for budgetary measures. November 11, 2004 was on a Thursday and Spring Break coincided with an early Easter during March 2005. The result was school closure for **Friday, November 12, 2004** and a **two-week Spring Break ('05)**. 4 days of instructional time was added in the manner of adding minutes to the school days of instruction.

2007 for 07/08

The Standard School Calendar was reviewed in the Spring ('07) and adjusted for the 2007-2008 school year. This review was initiated due to interest from the School District and partner groups identifying a late Spring Break (Ministry Standard School Calendar) and an early Easter Break ('08). This review was for the logistic and budgetary reasons of the Spring and Easter Breaks being in close proximity to one another (similar to 2005). The result was a **two-week Spring Break ('08)**. There was no loss of pay for CUPE employees for this Local School Calendar.

2009 for 09/10

The Standard School Calendar was reviewed ('09) considering the potential movement of the one-week Spring Break to align itself with the Vancouver 2010 Olympics. In addition, a review of a potential additional week for Spring Break was considered. The committee could not come to agreement on these two issues. Therefore, a "status quo" recommendation for the 2010 Spring Break was put forth to Trustees.

2010 for 10/11

The Standard School Calendar was reviewed ('10) with the focus for a potential two week Spring Break and additional days of closure for monetary savings due to a budget reduction forecast for the school district for 2010/11. The committee put forth a recommendation for a two-week Spring Break and a one day closure (November 12, 2010) for the 10/11 school year. The Board accepted the recommendations resulting in a **2 week Spring Break (2011) and one day closure (November 12, 2010)**. Time in order of minutes was added to the school days in session and CUPE suffered no loss of pay.

2011 for 11/12

As a follow-up to the Board request in 2010 for a review of future years potential of a two week Spring Break and or amendments to the school calendar, a committee representing all partner groups was formed and a survey in the community was once again initiated. Results confirm previous anecdotal feedback and the previous survey ('10) demonstrating an interest for a two week Spring Break. Also of interest to the community was an interest in some long weekends. The Board accepted the recommendations resulting in a **2 week Spring Break (2012)**. Time in order of minutes was added to the school days in session and CUPE suffered no loss of pay.

2011 for 12/13

The Standard School Calendar was reviewed (2011/12 school year) to review the interest of having a two-week Spring Break ('13). The review was conducted earlier than in past years (Fall 2011) in order to provide as much notice as possible to all students, parents and staff. The review was discussed and reviewed at the October Education and Programs Standing Committee meeting and documents were made public through SchoolConnects and the School District website. The decision for the 2012/13 Calendar was made at the November 2011 Board of Education meeting, which resulted in a **2 week Spring Break (12/13)**. Time in order of minutes was added to the school days in session and CUPE suffered no loss of pay.

2012 for 13/14

The initiation of Bill 36 has resulted in no Standard School Calendar for all school districts in the Province. School District #44 has formed a School Calendar Review Steering Group with representatives from all partner groups. The process for the School Calendar Review was shared and discussed at the November 27, 2012 Board of Education meeting.

2013 for 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17

Process with partner groups will begin in May 2013.