

# North Vancouver School District School Calendar Steering Group

## January 13, 2014 – Meeting Summary Notes

**Facilitator** Dorli Duffy

### **Steering Group Members**

In Attendance:

Trustee Christie Sacre  
Karen Nordquist – NVPAC  
Kathy Owens – NVPAC  
Deb Wanner – NoVA - Elem  
Brenda Bell – NoVA - Elem  
Maureen Stanger – NoVA - Sec  
Greg Hockley – NoVA – Sec  
Joyce Griffiths – CUPE  
Carol Nordby – CUPE  
Mark Jefferson – District Staff – Assistant Superintendent  
Pius Ryan – District Staff – Assistant Superintendent  
Scott Stanley – District Staff – Human Resources Director  
Xenia O'Brien – District Staff – Human Resources  
Michael Kee – District Staff – Human Resources  
Greg Milner – District Staff – Admin Services  
Rena Violato – District Staff – Payroll  
Dan Storms – NVTA  
Jane Blaiklock - NVTA

Absent:

Trustee Cyndi Gerlach  
Kelly La Roue – NoVA - Elem

### **1.0 Objectives**

On January 13, 2014, the North Vancouver School District School Calendar Steering Group (SCSG) held their third meeting in the 2013/14 school year at the NVSD Education Services Centre. The meeting objectives were to:

- Review considerations associated with four draft calendar matrices
- Consider additional feedback regarding the 2014/15 calendar
- Confirm recommendation to the Board of Trustees' January 21, 2014 Public Board Meeting
- Clarify next steps including additional information needs and subsequent meetings

This document provides a brief summary of discussions held during the meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation from the January 13, 2014 meeting is posted on the North Vancouver School District's website [\[Link\]](#).

## **2.0 Background to January 13, 2014 meeting**

At the end of the December 9, 2014 School Calendar Steering Group meeting, most members supported the recommendation of a draft 2014/15 School Calendar matrix (Option A) to the Board of Trustees for public consideration. However, NVTA and CUPE representatives expressed the need to communicate with their constituencies in advance of offering their full support as they were not comfortable to make a recommendation to the Board, before hearing back from their constituents. Both the NVTA and CUPE #389 agreed to meet separately with School District staff/representatives to discuss any specific collective agreement matters prior to the January 13, 2014 meeting. Following meetings between the NVSD and NVTA, it became apparent that the NVTA would not support the draft calendar matrix without further consultation with their membership.

Three draft calendar matrices were circulated for Steering Group consideration on January 7, 2014 (Options A, B, and C). A fourth matrix (Option D) was circulated at the January 13 meeting.

## **3.0 Review of considerations associated with the draft calendar**

Assistant Superintendent Mark Jefferson began the meeting with a high-level overview of the rationale behind the 2013/14 school calendar decision. He also reiterated the guiding principles, consultation feedback and considerations that have informed Steering Group discussions to date:

- No dramatic changes to school calendar
- Look at students' best interests first
- Compliance with Ministry of Education requirements
- Compliance with Collective Agreement provisions
- 2 Week Winter Break
- 2 Week Spring Break
- Logical extension to weekends with statutory holidays
- Student and employee health and wellness
- Congruence with other School Districts
- No July/August schooling time

CUPE representatives offered an additional consideration: some CUPE members are compensated for the loss of time during a second week of Spring Break, while others are not compensated. Some members use a week of their vacation time during the second week of Spring Break (secondary administrative assistants, and custodians). For these CUPE members, "making up time" is therefore another consideration.

Steering Group members were reminded throughout the meeting that achieving all of these considerations in a school calendar requires careful balancing and thoughtful deliberation.

#### 4.0 Review of four draft matrices for 2014/15 School Calendar

##### 4.1 Option A

Considerations	Option A
1. Falls within 10 month calendar	1. September 2 – June 26
2. Feedback supports	2. November 10 closure day
3. Feedback supports	3. Two Week Winter Break
4. Feedback supports (Educational Rationale) less four day weeks for students and teachers (April and May) North Vancouver and Abbotsford	4. Two Week Spring Break aligned with Easter Break (March 21 – April 6)
5. Feedback supports	5. Collaboration Time (Elementary & Secondary)
* Must have NVTAs agreement (Collective Agreement)	

##### 4.2 Option B

Considerations	Option B
1. Falls within 10 month calendar	1. September 2 – June 26
2. Feedback supports	2. November 10 closure day
3. Feedback supports	3. Two Week Winter Break
4. Feedback supports (Aligned with Delta & Richmond (more 4 day weeks in April/May which students, parents and teachers have indicated to be disruptive for continuity reasons))	4. Two Week Spring Break (March 14 – 29)
5. Feedback supports	5. Collaboration Time (Elementary & Secondary)
* Must have NVTAs agreement (Collective Agreement)	

### 4.3 Option C

Considerations	Option C
1. Falls within 10 month calendar	1. September 2 – June 30
2. Feedback supports	2. November 10 closure day
3. Feedback supports	3. Two Week Winter Break
4. Contrary to feedback gathered	4. One Week Spring Break (March 14 – 22)
5. Feedback supports	5. Collaboration Time (Elementary & Secondary)
* Compliant with terms of NVSD/NVTA Collective Agreement	

**4.4 Option D** – *The matrix for Option D distributed at the meeting presented a model that did not include a November closure day. Preference for retention of the November closure day was confirmed. These notes reflect discussion of an Option D model that incorporates the November closure day.*

Considerations	Option D
1. Falls within 10 month calendar	1. September 2 – June 29
2. Feedback supports	2. November 10 closure day
3. Feedback supports	3. Two Week Winter Break
4. Feedback Supports and Aligned with Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, New Westminster, Coquitlam, West Vancouver (more 4 day weeks in April/May which students, parents and teachers have found to be disruptive for continuity reasons)	4. Two Week Spring Break (March 7-22)
5. Feedback supports	5. Collaboration Time (Elementary & Secondary)
* Must have NVTA agreement (Collective Agreement)	

### 5.0 Discussion of four draft matrices for 2014/15 School Calendar

Steering Group members discussed each of the School Calendar matrices in relation to the above considerations. Discussions focused primarily on the inclusion (or not) of November 10 as a school closure day and the congruence of Spring Break with other School Districts.

## **November 10 school closure**

While some members questioned whether a school closure on November 10 adds or subtracts from the significance of November 11, and therefore questioned the need for a November 10 closure day, others reiterated survey data and attendance data that shows overwhelming support for a November 10 closure day to support health and wellness. 2012 survey data indicates overwhelming support (75-94%) for including November 10 as a school closure day when November 11 falls on a Tuesday (or November 13 when November 11 falls on a Thursday). School District data (2005 and 2010) shows a two-thirds decline in absenteeism following the four-day weekend. Some participants expressed support. There was very strong Steering Group support for the inclusion of November 10 as a closure date.

## **Timing of Spring Break**

Options A, B and D each provide a two week Spring Break in different time slots. Option A shows Spring Break ending with the Easter weekend (March 21 – April 6). Option B shows Spring Break from March 14-29, and Option D shows Spring Break from March 7 – 22.

The placement of Spring Break dates in Option A reduces the number of 4-day weeks in April. Both Options B and D provide two four-day weeks in April. While some members suggested that teachers can adapt to four-day weeks, others reminded the group that our feedback suggests that parents and teachers would appreciate fewer four-day weeks at that time of year.

NVTA representatives expressed a desire to align the NVSD Spring Break with other school districts. Several other members also indicated a preference for congruence with other school districts so that employees with children in other school districts would experience Spring Break together and to facilitate athletic events between school districts. Others suggested that distributing Spring Breaks between school districts reduces travel pressure during those time periods.

As indicated in the PowerPoint presentation, other School Districts are considering Spring Break dates as follows:

March 9-20	Burnaby, Coquitlam, New Westminister, Surrey, Vancouver, West Vancouver
March 16-27	Delta, Richmond
March 23 – April 6	North Vancouver, Abbotsford

Steering members were reminded that all school districts are in the same process of setting school calendars for 2014/15, and that our timeline does not permit us to wait until others have made their decision. Legislation requires that the Board-approved 2014/15 School Calendar be submitted to the Minister of Education on or before March 31, 2014. Allowing for a 30-day review period requires that the Steering Group make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees at their January 21, 2014 Public Board

Meeting. The Steering Group will review feedback following the close of the public review period, and confirm its recommendation to the Board of Trustees at the March Board Meeting.

NVTA representatives also expressed a preference for situating the Spring Break to overlap with the BCTF AGM held during March 14-17, 2015. Between 10 and 20 members of the NVTA executive would be affected by this decision.

### ***Other considerations***

CUPE representatives noted that while Option C requires less “make up time”, they were willing to support Option A.

### ***Conclusion***

A “temperature check” of the four options showed most support for Option A, some support for Option D, and little to no support for Options B and C. At the end of the meeting, all Steering Group representatives were willing to support a recommendation for Option A except the NVTA representatives. Steering Group members made a concerted effort to find a common middle ground, but were unsuccessful in doing so.

## **6.0 Recommended Draft 2014/15 School Calendar matrices for Board of Trustee and public consideration – Options A and C**

The majority of Steering Group members supported a recommendation of Option A to the Board of Trustees for public consideration. The NVTA representatives were unable to provide support for this option and reiterated the need to communicate with their constituencies prior to confirming their support. In the absence of consensus by the Steering Group, Mark Jefferson confirmed that Option C would need to be forwarded to the Board of Trustees as well, as it is the only option that is currently in alignment with the NVSD/NVTA Collective Agreement.

Many Steering Group members expressed concern about forwarding Option C to the Board of Trustees, as they know there is little to no support for a one-week Spring Break. They also expressed concern that Option C extends the school year into the last week of June.

The NVTA indicated that they will meet separately with School District staff/representatives to discuss these issues further prior to Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup> when the Board materials must be sent out for the January 21 Board meeting.

## **7.0 Summary of Next Steps**

Following meetings between the NVSD and the NVTA this week, Steering Group participants will be notified of any changes in support by the NVTA.

- Finalize January 13, 2014 meeting summary - post on website and circulate to email contacts
- Steering Group members to communicate progress to constituents
- Friday, January 17 – Steering Group recommendation included in Board materials for January 21, 2014 Public Board Meeting
- 30 day public review of draft 2014/15 calendar(s)
- Next Steering Group meeting – February 24, 2014

### **Next Meeting**

The objectives of the February 24, 2014 School Calendar Steering Group meeting, will include:

- Reviewing feedback from the public review period regarding the 2014/15 calendar(s)
- Recommending a 2014/15 School Calendar to the Board of Trustees
- Clarifying next steps including additional information needs, homework and subsequent meetings

Steering Group members are reminded that you have been asked to serve as representatives of your schools, group or organization. Please strive to be inclusive of the array of perspectives within your constituency when circulating information and participating in Steering Group discussions.

# DRAFT - 2014-15 SCHOOL CALENDAR - Option A

181 Instructional Days, 2 Week Spring Break, November Long Weekend

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**2\*** 1ST DAY OF SCHOOL IS PARTIAL DAY

- STAT HOLIDAY
- NO SCHOOL
- WINTER BREAK (2 weeks)
- SPRING BREAK (2 weeks)
- DISTRICT (NVTA) PRO D DAY (3)
- SCHOOL-BASED PRO D DAY (2)
- NVSD CURRIC IMPL DAY (1)
- STAFF COLLAB X 7
- ADMIN DAY



# DRAFT - 2014-15 SCHOOL CALENDAR - Option B

181 Instructional Days, 2 Week Spring Break, November Long Weekend, June 29 Admin Day

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- SPRING BREAK (2 weeks)
- DISTRICT (NVTA) PRO D DAY (3)
- SCHOOL-BASED PRO D DAY (2)
- NVSD CURRIC IMPL DAY (1)
- STAFF COLLAB X 7
- ADMIN DAY

# DRAFT - 2014-15 SCHOOL CALENDAR - Option C

**187** Instructional Days, 1 Week Spring Break, November Long Weekend, June 30 Admin Day

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- ADMIN DAY

# DRAFT - 2014-15 SCHOOL CALENDAR - Option D

181 Instructional Days, 2 Week Spring Break (9-20), November Long Weekend, June 29 Admin Day

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