



# NEWS RELEASE

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## L.A. School Board Approves School Calendar for One Year

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Board of Education tonight approved the dates when the school year begins and ends, allowing students in the nation’s second-largest district to follow a schedule that mimics the current school year calendar.

The first day of school is Aug. 16, 2016 and the last day is June 9, 2017. Under this plan, the first semester finishes before students take a three-week winter break. Then, school resumes after the first week of January and ends in early June.

By a 5-2 vote, board members approved a school calendar recommended by District staff that is becoming an increasingly sensitive subject: when should the school year start and close, as well as how long should holiday breaks last?

The board spent about 90 minutes debating the benefits and drawbacks of this question but found no easy answers.

An advisory group of board member staffs, parents, principals and union employees was set up to study the best path for student learning. Parents and employees also were surveyed, their opinions sought on starting and ending the school year.

Some said an earlier start date that allows the first semester to end by the time winter break starts benefits high school seniors more than other students. It allows them more time to apply for college, and to finish courses before their vacation begins.

“I do not understand what our rationale is: to accommodate a few high school students, which are wonderful students but they’re not the only students in the district?” said Board Vice President George J. McKenna III.

Board President Steve Zimmer said many families struggling economically often prefer their children to be in school “as much as possible.” People are generally thankful when school is open earlier.”

Despite the data collected and opinions from the District’s academic experts, there was a sharp discussion between board members over the best course of action. Amid strong views on both sides of the issue, the board approved the calendar for a single school year instead of the three that had been proposed. Some members said they believe more data and time would help them reach a better decision for future school years.

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