



LINCOLN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD ENHANCED SCHOOL CALENDAR (ESC) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is the LPSB launching an enhanced school calendar program?

Many school children throughout the United States, including some in Lincoln Parish, suffer from a nationally-recognized educational concern known as “summer learning loss,” which occurs when students are no longer exposed to educational activities and enrichment opportunities during the summer months. This loss grows over time, to the point where by the end of fifth grade, some students are approximately two full years behind and never advance to meet their full potential. This education deficit can have lifelong implications, and the LPSB believes an enhanced school calendar can help reduce this deficit and get these children on-track academically.

By adding 30 extra days of school during two summer months, students can gain an additional full year of school over a six-year period. This is an investment in our students and our community.

Is this a “year-round school” program?

No, this program is not year-round school, but instead adding 30 days to the traditional school calendar. Students in the program will still have a significant break at the end of the traditional school year, one over the Fourth of July holiday, and then again before the traditional school calendar begins in mid-August. There will still be ample time for family vacations and other recreational activities.

The program will provide traditional classroom instruction, but with more emphasis on interaction and hands-on experiences, such as interactive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) opportunities, art and performing arts options, and more out-of-classroom experiences, such as co-curricular field trips.

What has the LPSB done to develop and approve this program?

The LPSB conducted extensive research, visited school systems that are using the enhanced school calendar, and held numerous discussions in Ruston with school principals, teachers, parents, community officials and organization leaders. Based on those activities, the School Board has decided to implement a pilot program at two elementary schools using an enhanced school calendar beginning in 2018.

How many students and teachers will be involved?

The pilot program is designed to accommodate up to 500 students at the two schools and will involve approximately 30 teachers. The average class size will be 20 students. Students will have to apply for the program, and participants will be selected in a lottery if the number of applicants exceeds 500. Teachers will also have to apply, and will be selected based on need, credentials, and experience and administrative evaluation.

Will students who are admitted to the pilot program be guaranteed a spot in the program in subsequent years?

Yes, once a student is accepted into the program, he or she is guaranteed a spot in subsequent years as long as their participation is continuous and they are not involved in significant disciplinary issues. (Students with minor past disciplinary issues will be allowed to participate in the lottery.) If a student drops out of the program for a session, they must re-apply.

Why isn't this program available to everyone?

The pilot program approach was chosen for two reasons: First, the School Board wants to be sure the program works well and is effective before committing to it on a larger scale. Second, starting on a small-scale allows the LPSB to monitor the program closely and make necessary adjustments quickly and efficiently. This should result in a better, more effective program if and when it is expanded.

How were the two schools selected?

Cypress Springs and Glen View were the two schools that had the largest student populations and strongest interest, and therefore the greatest chance for a successful pilot program.

Will this program eventually be open to all children in the Parish?

The LPSB hopes to make this program available across the Parish at some point, but how well the pilot program goes will factor into any decision about offering the program on a larger scale.

Is the program voluntary?

This program is entirely voluntary - no one is required to participate.

How is the Lincoln Parish School Board paying for this program?

Funding for the ESC program will come from several sources, including existing general budgets, grants that have been applied for, and additional state funding has been requested. The overall budget increase attributable to this pilot program is minimal – less than one percent.

What curriculum will be used?

The core curriculum will be the same as that which is used during the traditional school year. This program is not “summer school” or child care – it simply is beginning the school year at an earlier date with a standard core curriculum, plus some enhanced opportunities.

What kind of “enriched” curriculum are you planning to offer?

The enriched curriculum will have an emphasis on interaction and hands-on experiences, such as interactive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) opportunities, art and performing arts options, and more out-of-classroom experiences, such as co-curricular field trips.

What services will be provided to the children on the extra days?

All normal school services will be provided – transportation, meals, and coordination with after school programs. Students will also receive basic school supplies and one uniform shirt.

Will the children still have regular vacation time off and holiday breaks?

Yes, in addition to all holidays and breaks in the traditional school year, students in the enhanced program will have a significant break at the end of the traditional school year, one over the Fourth of July holiday, and then again before the traditional school calendar begins in mid-August. There will still be ample time for family vacations and other recreational activities.