

Appendix B

**SCHOOL START DATE SURVEY
SUMMARY RESULTS - ALL SURVEYS**

(n=42,523)

1. I am primarily completing this survey as a:

Parent	29%
Student	1%
Community member/taxpayer	3%
Employer/Businessperson	0.9%
Teacher	50%
School employee	9%
School administrator	6%
School board member	0.3%

ALTERNATIVE CALENDARS

2. When do you feel the school year should begin?

Whenever the district wants to start	16%
Between August 16-20	19%
Between August 21-25	13%
Between August 26-31	13%
Week of September 1	14%
After Labor Day	24%
No Response	0.7%

3. When do you feel the school year should end?

Whenever the district wants to end	12%
On or before May 20	4%
Between May 21-25	9%
Between May 26-28	23%
Between May 29-31	40%
Week of June 1	12%
No Response	0.6%

4. How many days should students have for the Winter Break (Christmas/New Years)?

Whatever the district decides	12%
8 days	5%
10 days	34%
12 days	12%
14 days	37%
No Response	0.6%

5. How long should students have for Thanksgiving holiday?

Thursday and Friday	12%
Wednesday through Friday	50%
Tuesday through Friday	2%
Monday through Friday	35%
No Response	0.5%

6. In addition to Thanksgiving holidays, how many days should students have for Fall break?

None	50%
2 Days	26%
3 Days	9%
4 Days	2%
5 Days	12%
No Response	2%

7. How important is it to you that the first semester ends before the Winter/Christmas break?

Ending the semester before the break is critical and should be a key factor in determining start date	39%
Prefer ending the semester before the break even if it means starting school earlier	20%
No preference	15%
Prefer starting later even if the first semester does not end until January	11%
Starting school later is more important than when the first semester ends	14%
No Response	0.5%

STUDENT LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION

The statewide tests called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) are currently administered between February and April of each year.

8. Should the state's assessment tests, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) be administered earlier in the school year?

Yes	8%
No	90%
No Response	1%

9. Should the TAKS be administered later in the school year?

Yes	50%
No	49%
No Response	2%

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
10. The quality of instruction is maintained after the TAKS is administered.	22%	34%	20%	10%	9%	4%	1%
11. Moving TAKS testing to a later date would allow an appropriate amount of time for receiving the results, planning for the remediation of students who did not pass, <i>and</i> developing action plans.	15%	30%	17%	22%	8%	6%	2%
12. Moving TAKS testing to a later date would have an impact on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate testing and preparation.	7%	17%	40%	11%	3%	18%	2%
13. The current school year allows adequate time to teach the state-mandated curriculum (TEKS) covered by the TAKS test.	14%	42%	13%	17%	8%	5%	2%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
14. It is worthwhile to you for your school district to receive a waiver for more professional development days in the calendar.	13%	25%	22%	22%	11%	5%	2%
15. The scheduling of dates and topics for professional development days should be left to local control.	38%	40%	10%	4%	2%	3%	2%
16. I would benefit by having professional development days before the start of school.	18%	34%	22%	14%	6%	4%	3%
17. I am satisfied with the quality of the professional development provided in my district.	17%	40%	18%	12%	6%	5%	3%
18. The design and implementation of professional development is useful to me in improving student achievement.	15%	40%	23%	10%	5%	5%	3%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Continued

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
19. The professional development I receive is based on best practices in the educational field.	14%	36%	27%	9%	4%	7%	4%
20. I have no difficulty scheduling and completing college-level courses during the summer break.	6%	14%	44%	12%	10%	11%	4%

WAIVER OF SCHOOL START DATE

21. How should public input on waiver requests be facilitated?

Allowing comment via the district website	9%
Sending home questionnaires with students	10%
Allowing e-mail comments from the public on waiver requests	3%
Requiring petitions signed by a percentage of parents and teachers in the district	5%
Some combination of the above	67%
Accepting comment only from attendees at a public hearing	4%
No Response	3%

22. The elected school board should make the final decision to submit a waiver request based upon:

Their best judgment after receiving public comment	38%
A preponderance of public comment	7%
A documented clear majority of parents and teachers asking for an earlier start date	38%
The board should not have authority to request a waiver to the start date	13%
No Response	3%

23. The Texas Education Agency should accept a waiver request if:

One is submitted by the elected school board	15%
The school board has held a hearing and, in their judgment, an earlier start date is warranted.	14%
The school board has documented that a clear majority of parents, teachers and community members want an earlier start date	53%
The agency should not have authority to waive the start date	13%
No Response	5%

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
24. I have a strong voice in deciding when school will start and end.	8%	18%	10%	31%	28%	3%	3%
25. Local control over school start dates is more important than the need for uniform start dates.	26%	29%	9%	19%	12%	2%	3%

MIGRANT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
26. It is important for secondary students to hold a paid summer job.	13%	43%	22%	12%	2%	3%	4%
27. Migrant children's scholastic achievement is comparable to their classmates who remain in school throughout the year.	3%	8%	24%	32%	16%	14%	4%
28. Late school registration/early school withdrawal negatively affects a migrant child's TAKS scores.	24%	35%	19%	5%	2%	12%	4%
29. Migrant services within my school/district prepare migrant children well for the spring TAKS administration.	3%	17%	38%	10%	4%	23%	4%
30. The earlier school start dates make it more difficult for students and educators to obtain meaningful summer employment.	22%	27%	18%	15%	7%	7%	4%

The following question is for school employees, only. If you are not a school district employee, please skip to Question 32.

31. If you work during the summer months, what percent of your income is attributed to summer employment?

Less than 5 percent	24%
6 to 10 percent	12%
11 to 20 percent	8%
21 to 40 percent	4%
More than 40 percent	2%
No Response	50%

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

32. How long would districts need, in your opinion, to phase-in a standard start date and adjust calendars?

None, the change could be implemented for the 2005-06 school year.	57%
One year, effective with the 2006-07 school year.	23%
Two years, effective with the 2007-08 school year.	15%
No Response	5%

Appendix B: Summary of Survey Results

33. If a later school start date were imposed, when should the school year end?

End of May	70%
First week in June	21%
Second week in June	5%
No Response	4%

34. What, in your opinion, are the reasons driving the start date in your school district?
(List your top five choices with 1= most important; 5 = least important)

Survey for Questions	Most Important	2	3	4	Least Important	No Response
Giving teachers training and/or work days during the school year	18%	16%	19%	11%	14%	22%
Observing a full week off for Thanksgiving	14%	10%	12%	9%	21%	33%
Needing extra days for TAKS preparation	16%	14%	17%	10%	11%	32%
Observing a full week off for Spring break	22%	15%	15%	10%	11%	28%
Having final exams before Winter break	42%	17%	12%	6%	7%	15%
Observing a full week off for Fall break	10%	6%	8%	7%	27%	43%
Sports-related issues (UIL practice schedules)	12%	10%	16%	9%	17%	37%
Insuring that students receive a full 180 days of instruction	36%	17%	13%	7%	8%	20%
Ending the school year earlier in May	13%	13%	16%	12%	17%	30%
Observing a longer Winter break	11%	10%	16%	10%	17%	36%
Other	5%	1%	1%	0.4%	2%	90%

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, Continued

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	No Response
35. It is academically critical for the fall semester to end before the Winter Break.	39%	22%	11%	16%	7%	2%	4%
36. Local communities should have flexibility to set local holidays for such things as stock shows, county fairs and the like.	34%	38%	12%	7%	4%	1%	4%