



Save Kentucky Summers

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A grass roots coalition is working to push the school calendar back as students face another week of sweltering heat.

Each year, it seems like school starts earlier and earlier.

Many districts in our area have been back in session since the first few days of August.

But a group called "Save Kentucky Summers" says that's too early.

Portia Pennington is a mother of four kids who are going to school in Warren County.

She said there are several reasons Kentucky needs go to a statewide start date.

"I've always thought we've started too early. You're trying to schedule church camp, other activities like family reunions, family vacations and just downtime. Kids need their downtime. We're losing millions of tourism dollars because our summers are short," Pennington explained.

Barret Lessenberry is a spokesman for "Save Kentucky Summers."

He said eleven other states have saved millions in utility bills by not being in school during the month of August.

"Texas saved \$50-million. The real reason was just for families to be able to do something together," Lessenberry said.

Lessenberry has kids in school and has been a part of this cause for about four years.

He said it all started with a simple question.

"Would you prefer a later August start date? 2500-people here locally said 'yes,'" Lessenberry assured.

"Everyone is asking why we're back in school so early," Pennington added.

Except for most school employees.

Barren County High School Principal Keith Hale said having a longer summer actually hurts kids because teachers have to backtrack at the beginning of the year.

"If you don't use it, you lose it. The summers are long enough," Hale said.

But if you want something changed, there's a way to get your voice heard.

"I'm sure the legislatures want to know about the keen interest for a late August start date," Lessenberry said.

Go to Savekentuckysummers.com, scroll down and click "Take Action." Just type in your information and click send.

"Families want this and I have to believe the legislators want to know what the masses want," Lessenberry admitted.

Lessenberry also said the recent heat wave also impacts the need for a later start date.

He added that kids are being forced to ride on school buses exceeding 100-degrees for long periods of time.

"Save Kentucky Summers" has presented its case to the General Assembly, but the state hasn't made any moves to a statewide start date.

For more information about "Save Kentucky Summers," log on to SaveKentuckySummers.com.

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