

Flexible School Calendar Legislation 2010 Regular Session

Passage of this legislation would:

- ◆ Give local school boards the flexibility of scheduling anywhere from 165 to 180 days of school during a 40 week window while maintaining the current number of instructional hours. Teacher salaries would not be affected.
- ◆ Allow local school boards to develop a school calendar best suited for their community.
- ◆ Allow the first semester to be completed before Christmas break if a local school board wishes to do so.
- ◆ Allow local school boards to save up to 15 days of school operation costs by extending the length of the instructional day from 6 hours to no more than 6½ hours.
- ◆ Allow local school boards to provide students with more instructional time prior to high-stakes standardized testing in April by turning instructional days in May into instructional hours earlier in the school year.
- ◆ Give Alabama children and their families a full 12-week summer vacation each year.
- ◆ Increase the length of the summer vacation season by approximately 2 weeks, or 10 school days.

Travel and Tourism has a major impact on Alabama's economy. Auburn University Montgomery's *Economic Impact of Alabama Travel Industry – 2008* found that:

- ◆ Every \$83,945 of expenditures in the travel industry creates one direct job in Alabama.
- ◆ For every two direct jobs created, the Alabama economy indirectly creates one additional job.
- ◆ For every \$1 in Travel-Related Spending in Alabama:
 - Salaries and wages increase by 39 Cents
 - Alabama State Government Collects 5 Cents
 - Local Governments Collect 2 Cents

An Economic Analysis of Early School Start Date in Alabama released by Auburn University Montgomery in February 2009 found that:

- ◆ **The Total Economic Loss of a compressed summer in Alabama is \$333.3 million each year. (By way of comparison, 2007 studies by the respective universities found the Total Economic Impact on the state of Alabama for all Auburn and Alabama home football games combined was \$323.1 million each year.)**
- ◆ **The benefit of 10 more days of the summer vacation season to State and Local Governments in Alabama is \$59.6 million each year:**
 - \$1.37 million in additional Income Tax Revenues
 - \$12.95 million in additional State Tax Revenues each year
 - \$5.18 million in additional Local Tax Revenues each year
 - \$40.1 million in savings to Local School Systems each year

Tourism expenditures in Alabama fell by 4.98% (\$195 million) in the first half of the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Two more weeks of summer vacation in 2008 would have offset that loss and actually increased those expenditures by \$65 million.

What do parents say?

A Capitol Survey Research Center Poll from January 2009 found that 83% of registered voters support a standard school start date for Alabama.

What do teachers say?

On December 4, 2009, the AEA Delegate Assembly passed a resolution stating: "AEA supports legislation to require that the opening of school each year will be in mid to late August."

What do the facts say?

Public schools in the top ten states based on Cumulative ACT Scores and on Percentage Change from 1998 to 2008 in ACT Scores and in Cumulative SAT Scores begin their fall semester classes in mid to late August or after September 1st.

The average National Rank in 2008 ACT Composite Score for the 11 states with school start date laws on the books is 31. Alabama ranks 44th.

Question for legislators:

Is "local control" of just 10 days of school in early August worth over \$33 million/day to the people of Alabama?