



Richard L. Paylor
Superintendent

Jody McClenny
Blair E. Propst
Assistant Superintendents

107 SAFRIT DRIVE, BEAUFORT, NC 28516
252-728-4583 / 252-728-3028 FAX

www.carteretcountyschools.org

Board of Education
Kathryn Smith Chadwick, Chair
Katie Statler, Vice Chair

Travis Day
Dennis M. Goodwin
Clark Jenkins
Dana Vinson Mull
Brittany Wheatly

2025-2026 CCPS Calendar Frequently Asked Questions (updated 3/12/25)

Question: What is the current calendar law and the process CCPS uses to determine the calendar and what are the proposed calendars for 2025-2026?

Answer: Click here to view a [presentation including the 2025-2026 calendaring process](#) and proposed calendars from the December 3, 2024, and January 7, 2025, CCPS Board of Education Meetings

Question: Where can I find the Board's discussions and academic concerns regarding the 2025-26 CCPS school calendar and calendar law?

Answer: Click on the following links to access CCPS Board Meeting Videos and calendar discussions for the 2025-2026 school year (videos are cued up to calendar discussion): [December 2024](#), [January 2025](#), [February 2025](#)

Question: The public was asked for feedback on the calendar law and the 2025-26 calendar. What were the results of that survey? During the January 7, 2025 Board of Education meeting, the Board requested further community feedback on the current calendar proposals for the 2025-2026 school year. While each calendar process always historically includes parent and staff feedback, because of current statewide debate surrounding calendar law, the provision of a sound, basic education as well as optimal career/college opportunities for all students, the Board wished to gather further feedback from the community at large through a survey. The survey closed on Friday, January 17, 2025, at 5:00 PM. [Here is the summary of results](#) for the public survey offered between January and February of 2025.

Question: Has a calendar been approved for 2025-2026?

Answer: Yes. A calendar was adopted on February 4, 2025. [Click here to see the calendar for 2025-26](#)

Question: Will there be any more discussion about school calendars or the calendar law in the future?

The Board of Education addressed this in a statement read on February 4, 2025, at the BOE meeting. [Click here to read the public statement.](#)

Question: What is the history and debate regarding school calendar law and the CCPS school calendars or court cases from previous years? See below

VISION

Engaging, Educating and Empowering ALL Learners from Cedar Island to Cedar Point.

2024-2025 CCPS Calendar Frequently Asked Questions (Updated 6/28/2024)

Since the 2024-2025 School Calendar for Carteret County Public Schools was released in December of 2023, there have been multiple developments leading to many valid questions that have arisen in the school community and the Carteret County community at large. We realize the North Carolina calendar statutes and the resulting situations in school systems across the state are complex, and also that the timing and lack of final calendar approval was frustrating for families. To assist in understanding the issues at hand, we have compiled frequently asked questions with answers from the Carteret County School Board and the Carteret County Public Schools Administrative staff.

Question: When will we know the final calendar for the 2024-2025 school year for CCPS?

Answer: The Board of Education held a special-called meeting at 10:00 AM on Friday, June 28, 2024. The BOE revisited the calendar, following updates on litigation and appeals that began on April 5, 2024. Friday's meeting can be viewed live on the school system's [YouTube channel](#).

Result: The Board made a motion to adopt a final revised calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. [View the motion and explanation here.](#) [View the final 2024-2025 school calendar here.](#) The Board also made a motion to drop their appeal and explore other ways of getting the constitutional questions in front of the constitutional court. [View the motion to drop the appeal and explanation here.](#)

Question: Why was the calendar issue held up when parents had plans for vacations and caregiving to make, and there was no final calendar as late as June 2024?

Answer: The School Board actually approved the 2024-25 calendar on December 5, 2023, at its regular meeting, and it was publicly posted, giving ample time for planning for the summer and fall of 2024. Litigation by local business owners was not filed until April 5, 2024. Since that time, the BOE understands the urgency for parents and has worked diligently with attorneys to resolve the calendar lawsuit while maintaining the best interest of the students of CCPS.

Here is a timeline of the most recent events:

December 5, 2023: After years of attempts to advocate for a change in the calendar statute at the state level, the School Board approves and posts the 2024-25 school calendar it believes is the best calendar option for students, aligning the calendar with local community colleges for the over 1000 high school

students who are able to (edited) take advantage of the Dual Enrollment program in a typical year through Carteret Community College and balancing the fall and spring semester instructional days in order to have semester exams prior to the Winter break. Note: CCPS joins approximately *twenty five percent of traditional public schools in North Carolina who currently have approved calendars that do not follow the calendar statutes. *[Source link](#)

April 5, 2024: A lawsuit is filed by local businesses in Carteret County in opposition to the calendar the Board approved on December 5th, 2023, stating the calendar defies state calendar statutes by starting earlier and therefore hurts local businesses. [Read CCPS's Press Release response here.](#)

May 20, 2024: The case is heard in Carteret County Superior Court, and Judge William Wolfe decides to present a ruling at a later date.

June 5, 2024: Carteret County Superior Court Judge Wolfe entered an order invalidating the 2024-25 school calendar, ruling that the calendar is contrary to the state school calendar statute and rejected the School Board's contention that the statute is unconstitutional. [Read CCPS's Press Release response here.](#)

June 13, 2024: The School Board holds a special-called meeting to discuss the latest ruling on the 2024-25 school calendar. After consulting with their attorneys, the Board moved to instruct attorneys to appeal the June 5th order and judgment in the calendar suit and ask the court for a stay of the order. [View the meeting here.](#) [Read CCPS's Press Release response here.](#)

June 27, 2024: In New Bern, NC, Superior Court Judge Hoyt Tessener denied a Carteret County Board of Education (BOE) request to stay a legal order issued June 5 that nullified the district's December 5, 2023, approved school calendar.

June 28, 2024: The School Board held another special-called meeting to discuss latest developments in the case. The Board made a motion to adopt a final revised calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. [View the motion and explanation here.](#) [View the final 2024-2025 school calendar here.](#) The Board also made a motion to drop their appeal and explore other ways of getting the constitutional questions in front of the constitutional court. [View the motion to drop the appeal and explanation here.](#)

Question: What are the state statutes for the North Carolina calendar law, and why are twenty five percent of traditional public schools in North Carolina choosing to challenge it?

Answer: The basic requirements of [NC GS 115C-84.2](#) SECTION 7A.11.(a) are as follows:

- Start date no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 (*August 26, 2024*)
- End date no later than the Friday closest to June 11 (*June 13, 2025*)

- Covers at least nine calendar months
- Must have a minimum of 185 days **or** 1,025 hours of instruction
- Total of 215 days in calendar (*staff start to end*)
- School shall not be held on Sunday
- Veterans Day shall be a holiday for all public-school students and personnel

Holidays and teacher workdays also have regulations that can be viewed in the link above

School districts are choosing to challenge the law because they believe the law is unconstitutional. It is unconstitutional because this law only applies to traditional public schools and not charter schools, cooperative innovative high schools, or private schools receiving state voucher money. These entities, who also receive state funding, are not subject to the current state calendar statutes, meaning that students in traditional public schools are not being treated equally. In fact, it puts traditional public school students at a clear disadvantage. Many schools not subject to the calendar statutes in Carteret County are starting earlier this year like Tiller School -August 13, St. Egbert's Catholic School -August 12, Nature School at Camp Albemarle -August 19, Gramercy Christian School -August 19, Sea of Learning -August 19.

Question: We hear other districts are getting around the law by adding minutes to the school day and still starting near the end of August and getting out after Memorial Day? Why doesn't CCPS do that?

Answer: While adding minutes to the school day will fulfill the calendar statute by school hours instead of by school days (*traditional public school calendars must have a minimum of 185 days **or** 1,025 hours of instruction*), this option does not benefit students, in our opinion. Adding 20 minutes to each day would not add enough instructional time to make up for the shortened calendar and resulting shortened number of instructional days students will be in school. While we understand why districts may choose this option due to the statute restrictions for traditional public schools only, it is not instructionally best for students.

Question: Who pays for the attorneys the school system is using?

Answer: CCPS is being represented by Tharrington Smith, Attorneys at Law, LLP. Carteret County Public Schools, as many other school systems do, pays into a trust each year to address potential litigation filed on behalf of or against the district. The North Carolina School Board, who administers the

trust, agreed to back CCPS financially in this calendar lawsuit, preserving taxpayer money and not dipping into CCPS funds intended for students.

Question: Why is CCPS (along with twenty five percent of public school systems across the state) choosing to ignore the statute or, “break the law?” Isn’t that a bad example for students? Aren’t there waivers or other ways to change the law?

Answer: The Constitution of the State of North Carolina requires our state to provide *equal* educational opportunities for all students. Our laws also require traditional school boards to provide a sound, basic education to enable our students to compete on an equal basis for gainful employment and admission to colleges and universities. The “school calendar law” applies only to traditional public schools. Charter schools, cooperative innovative high schools, and private schools receiving state voucher money are NOT subject to the school calendar law. This in and of itself means that students in traditional public schools are not being treated equally and the law is therefore unconstitutional. For reference, traditional public schools make up around 90% of schools as of 2023. [Source](#). This means nearly 10% of schools, or over 140,000 students in private schools receiving state funding, charter schools, and cooperative innovative high schools in NC have clear instructional advantages over students in traditional schools, and this is grossly unfair. For example, in 2022-23, 85% of the state funded schools with calendar flexibility received the school achievement grade of “A,” shedding light on the academic impact of calendar flexibility.

Over the last six years, multiple efforts have been made to advocate for changing the statutes, including Carteret County’s own [House Bill 236](#), introduced to the NC House in March of 2023. The bill succeeded in the House, but the NC Senate President Pro Tempore did not even allow it to be introduced in the Senate. Obviously, there has been tremendous support for such efforts, and CCPS has continued to try to advocate for changed statutes that are better for students, therefore *standing up for students*, to no avail.

Regarding waivers, religious schools, charter schools, cooperative innovative high schools, fully private schools, and private schools receiving state voucher money can create their own calendars and are not required to follow the school calendar law statute and therefore don’t need waivers at all. For traditional public schools, there are only waivers for school systems with consistent severe weather each year. Specifically, all schools within a district that schools in any local school administrative unit in a county

have been closed *eight days per year during any four of the last 10 years* because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations, according to [Senate Bill 187](#), SECTION 7A.11.(a). While CCPS has missed days in the past for hurricanes, the patterns are not consistent enough (compared to yearly snowy conditions in the mountains, for example), and we are not eligible for any current calendar waivers.

***Question:* Why is it so important to CCPS and other districts to challenge the law? How is it specifically better for students?**

Answer: The calendar statutes have been in place now for 20 years. School systems and education have changed tremendously in the last two decades, and it is time for the law to make room for more up-to-date opportunities and for the academic success of *all* students. After many efforts, over many years, to advocate for change of the calendar statute, The Carteret County Board of Education adopted the 2024-2025 school calendar with two purposes in mind that are better for students.

The first is to align our calendars with those of the community college. Many of our students are enrolled both in high school and in community college under a state program known as “dual enrollment.” ([See the benefits of the College and Career Promise program here](#)) This dual enrollment experience provides opportunities for high school students to obtain college credits, trade certifications and opportunities that expose them to valuable career opportunities. This program is also free of charge, saving students and families thousands of dollars. Additionally, when our school calendar is not aligned with the community college calendar, our dually enrolled students and their families are exposed to unnecessary hardships, as they must navigate two different calendars with different start dates, end dates, and breaks.

The second purpose of adopting the 2024-2025 calendar is to properly balance the instructional calendar and to allow students to take exams prior to Winter break. The calendar statute, and its late August start date, push the end of the first semester (with equal instructional days), to mid-January. This means students are taking exams after Winter break. This limits opportunities for students to take second semester college courses since the public school and community college calendars do not currently align. If we choose for students to take exams prior to Winter break with a late August semester start date, students are receiving significantly fewer instructional days in the fall semester, which negatively impacts student achievement. The current calendar law only affords us these two choices.

Neither of these choices, we believe, is what is best for students in their pursuit of academic excellence. We deeply regret that three businesses and some of their family members have challenged our 2024-2025 calendar in court. We do know our calendar has significant support among businesses and families in our county. We also know that strong academic performance of our schools creates one of the best environments for business and industry in our county. We have full confidence that the academic benefits of shifting just nine student days (fourteen calendar days) for an earlier start in August will produce no adverse impact on business and community. Our 2024-2025 school calendar was designed to promote the best interests of students, and students alone. Our traditional public school students deserve the equal opportunities afforded students in non-traditional schools that are funded with tax dollars. The exemptions from the school calendar law for non-traditional schools have so skewed the playing field, the school calendar law has become a vehicle for unequal opportunity for our students, and it must yield in the face of the State constitution. This is why we have strongly defended our 2024-2025 calendar in court, and we appreciate the support and patience of our community as we stand up for what is best for students.

Question: Why is the calendar change only concerned with high school students and not other students that make up the majority of Carteret County Public Schools?

Answer: This is actually untrue. The calendar issue affects all students, families and our community as a whole. [Click here for a comparison of two families](#) with students of varying ages, one with students attending a traditional public school system and one with students attending a state-funded charter school.

Question: What can I do if I support the change in calendar law for traditional public schools like Carteret County Public Schools?

Answer: The laws concerning calendar statutes are formed at the state level. Key contacts concerning this issue are:

NC House District 13 (Carteret, Craven)
Celeste C. Cairns
(919) 733-6275
Celeste.Cairns@ncleg.gov

NC Senate District 1 (Carteret, Craven)
Norman W. Sanderson
(919) 733-5706
Norman.Sanderson@ncleg.gov

NC Senate President Pro Tempore

Phil Berger

(919) 733-5708

Phil.Berger@ncleg.gov

VISION

Engaging, Educating and Empowering ALL Learners from Cedar Island to Cedar Point.