

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 10, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Parkdale School – Modified School Calendar

ORIGINATOR: E. Butler, Principal Parkdale School

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, Faye Parker

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parkdale modified school calendar (Appendix I) beginning in the 2001-2002 school year be approved.

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**Background:** There is evidence that a modified school calendar that provides more frequent but shorter breaks for students has the potential to positively impact student achievement. By eliminating a two-month break, it reduces the amount of time spent by teachers and students on review. As well, the periodic breaks appear to respond to a student's motivation and learning cycle and the student comes back after the breaks refreshed and ready to learn.

Members of Parkdale's Parent Council expressed an interest in the modified calendar three years ago, but they were asked to wait for the results of the pilot project at Eastwood before exploring the subject further.

In March 2001, a process of consultation was designed to determine support for the concept among parents and staff. Collective and individual discussions were held with staff. Parents were invited to attend one of three information sessions offered at different times and on different days. Based on input received from parents at these sessions, the original draft calendar was modified. Subsequently, parents were surveyed regarding their support for the specific modified school calendar provided in Appendix I. A copy of the parent survey and accompanying explanatory letter is provided in Appendix II.

**Support for Modified Calendar:** There is strong support from both staff and parents for the modified calendar. Ninety-two per cent of staff have indicated support. Parents representing 80 per cent of the student population responded to the survey. Of these, eighty-seven percent indicated support. The level of parental interest and involvement in this decision has been significant. Should the motion be approved, the intent is to continue to involve parents in determining possible activities and partnerships that would enhance opportunities for students during the break periods.

EB/GC:dh

APPENDIX I – Proposed Modified School Calendar for Parkdale School  
APPENDIX II – Parent Letter and Survey re: Modified School Calendar