

**ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES  
IN-DEPTH: YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION**



**Unit 5 Citizens Advisory Council**

**March 2007**

**Committee members:**

**Todd Vincent, Co-Chair**

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**Report of the Unit 5 Citizens' Advisory Council**  
**Alternative Education Structures In-Depth: Year Round Education**  
March 21, 2007

***Study Topic***

In its March 2006 CAC report, the Alternative Educational Structures committee identified year-round education as a topic in need of additional, detailed study. Often noted as a means of enhancing student performance and maximizing instructional time and space, year-round education requires a significant adjustment to the traditional academic calendar. Members of the Alternative Educational Structures In-Depth: Year-Round Education committee will advance existing CAC studies by providing a research-driven analysis of the potential implementation of year-round education in the Unit 5 community.

***Critical components of this study topic include:***

- Examining the foundational year-round education research provided in the CAC's March 2006 Alternative Educational Structures report
- Utilizing Alternative Educational Structures data and recommendations to guide further consideration of the following topics:
  - The extent to which identified advantages and disadvantages apply to the Unit 5 community
  - The ease with which identified policy concerns could feasibly be addressed by and within the Unit 5 community
  - Identification of a potentially desirable year-round education model based upon analysis of multiple factors including academic and logistical needs
- Gathering personal feedback from districts that have implemented year-round education programs
- Acquiring a sense of the Unit 5 community's desire for and receptivity to year-round education
- Authoring a formal report that includes a justified recommendation for further pursuit or tabling of the year-round education concept

**Report of the Unit 5 Citizens' Advisory Council**  
**Alternative Education Structures In-Depth: Year Round Education**  
March 21, 2007

**Committee Members**

Todd Vincent (NCHS), Chair	Shelly Richard (Towanda)
Javelin Lawrence (KJHS), Co-Chair	Will Scanlon (Hudson)
Crystal Crader (Pepper Ridge)	Apsara Sorensen (Glenn)
Kathy Sieg (Colene Hoose)	Karen Aplington (NCWHS)
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**Sub-Committee Membership**

**Community Impacts**

Chelley Jackson (Fairview)  
Kathy Sieg (Colene Hoose)  
Weihan Chang (Brigham)

**District Impacts**

Rhonda Coyle (PJHS)  
Terri Hayes (Towanda)  
Karen Aplington (NCWHS)  
Apsara Sorensen (Glenn)

**Student Achievement Excellence**

Oscar Salazar (Sugar Creek)  
Marc Gravel (Prairieland)  
Crystal Crader (Pepper Ridge)  
Javelin Lawrence (KJHS)

## **Executive Summary**

### **Overview and Methodology:**

While there are several types of Year-Round Education, with the unprecedented growth in Unit 5, the committee decided to focus primarily on the type that would maximize the utilization of the existing facilities (Multi-Track.) We divided into three sub-groups to research the following impacts as a result of going to Year-Round Education:

- Community Impacts
- District Impacts
- Student Achievement Excellence

Each sub-committee researched their topics and provided feedback to the rest of the group. Their research was done using the Internet, journals, and in-person interviews. The district conducted a survey during parent-teacher conferences with specific questions targeted to gathering opinions of the possibility of utilizing year-round education, which was used to help us reach our recommendation. A copy of those survey results is included in this document.

### **Committee Recommendations:**

The committee recommends not pursuing the use of Year-Round Education at the present time. From our research, one of the critical success factors is the acceptance and involvement of the community and parents. The results of the survey done during parent-teacher conferences clearly indicate resistance to the concept of implementing year-round education. While the community can be resilient enough to accommodate the change, by altering their programs to meet the change in demand, significant effort would be needed to do so. Additionally, there is no clear evidence that year-round education has a significant impact on student learning excellence. Finally, by extrapolating the Unit 5 growth projections, and assuming two types of multi-track calendars, using year-round education would only briefly prolong the use of existing facilities before new schools would need to be built.

If, however, a referendum did not pass, some alternative educational schedule would warrant further investigation as the potential only means of handling the growth expected.

## **Types of Year-Round School Summary**

### Year-Round Schooling types:

Year round schooling has evolved into two main models, which in turn, break down further into more detailed variations. This section will attempt to describe further the two major types of Year Round Schooling and their sub-types:

Single Track Year-Round Schooling: This model focuses on finding a more balanced way to spread vacation time periods into more even distributed schedules throughout the year, with a shorter summer vacation. The objective is to maintain continuity on the knowledge that is acquired avoiding the expensive review periods that take place at the beginning of a traditional school year.

Single Track Year-Round Schooling has several variations as follows:

- 45-15 Model: As its name implies, a 45-15 model allows students to attend school for 45 consecutive days followed by 15 days of vacation. This process is repeated four times through the year with the intention of completing the academic year in June.
- 60-20 Model: This type of model calls for schools sessions of 60 days followed by a 20 day vacation period. This process is repeated 3 times during the school year.
- Other Variations: Some schools are choosing irregular single track variations in which students are presented with a span of 220 days of available schooling in which they get to choose the required 180 days they must attend in order to complete an academic year. This option is very rare, but it has been adopted by schools in communities where there is a high degree of family migration in and out of the community.
- Community based: Yet another variation of Single Track Year-Round schooling is a schedule based on community needs that may cover any season of the year. The purpose is to fit attendance to special communities where attendance would be sacrificed if it is not scheduled around community needs, such as logging seasons, or planting seasons.

### Disadvantages of Single-Track Year-Round Schooling:

- Availability and difficulty finding child care
- Conflict with other activities and districts
- Increased school maintenance cost
- Increased administration cost
- Family time may be compromised by differing schedules

### Advantages of Single-Track Year-Round Schooling:

- Consistent attendance
- Reduced vandalism
- Better student retention of knowledge from one academic year to the next one

- Increased community involvement
- Increased parental involvement

Multi-Track Year-Round Schooling: In this model, students are organized in classes with staggered schedules, with some schools being on vacations and others in class. Not all students are in class at any given time.

As far as the variations for this model, they are very similar to the ones presented for Single Track Year-Round schooling with the difference that they are overlapped on a single physical location.

To illustrate, using an overlapping 45-15 model with three tracks would allow for the housing of as much as one third of additional students in a given school.

One item worthy of notice is that Multi-Track Year-Round Schooling has a tendency to comprise less traditional schedules similar to those based on community needs (previously mentioned).

Disadvantages of Multi-Track Year-Round Schooling:

- Complex schedules
- Availability and difficulty finding child care
- Conflict with other activities and districts
- Increased school maintenance cost
- Increased administration cost
- Difficult logistics on a multi-track environment
- Availability of teachers to support multi-track environments
- Consistency on track assignments

Advantages of Multi-Track Year-Round Schooling:

- Better attendance
- Reduced vandalism
- Better student monitoring and assessment
- Better use of student material and equipment
- Accommodation of more students in a building
- Increased community involvement
- Increased parental involvement

Beyond the advantages and disadvantages previously mentioned for both types of Year-Round schooling, there are other aspects that must be considered before a decision of incorporating this concept into a school community. Following is a synopsis of the effect of Year-Round Schooling on students learning.

## **Impact of Year-Round Education on the Community**

Several aspects of this were investigated, including impacts on families, acceptance by the community, and potential impact on those industries and local government agencies that provide services based on the current school calendar schedule.

Our sub-group looked at the possible impacts of the implementation of Year Round Education on Unit 5 Schools, and on the families in the schools. We planned several methods to obtain data, but when the results of the “October 27, 2006 Parent/Guardian Survey” became available, it was decided no further studies would be beneficial. The following is a summary of the information obtained up till that time.

### October 27, 2006 Parent/Guardian Survey

Shortly after our CAC group initially met, personnel from the Unit office created the “October 27, 2006 Parent/Guardian Survey” for people attending the Parent-Teacher conferences to complete at all district schools on October 27, 2006. Although the CAC committee was not involved with the creation or administration of the survey, we did obtain the summarized results (see exhibit #1) of the survey. According to the results, 1,820 surveys were completed (a fairly good number for a one-day event), with “most” schools providing 2-5% of the total results (20 schools). The survey results were presented at the November 29, 2006 Board of Education meeting.

The first two survey questions dealt with other options to increasing capacity in district schools – by increasing elementary classroom sizes, and by reverting to half-day Kindergarten. Although these two don’t directly impact Year Round Education, they are other options. Overall, these options were not looked upon favorably (see results).

The remainder of the questions dealt with the following YRE “formats”:

1) Single Tracking – This option spreads the school year over the full calendar year, with no long “summer vacation”, but fairly equal “quarter vacations”. All students in the district would either be in school or out at the same time. This format does not increase building capacity, but does have other favorable and unfavorable effects. The survey responses were 51.7% unfavorable or extremely unfavorable, with 30.3% being favorable or extremely favorable. The remainder was neutral/no opinion (17.2%) or no response (.9%). A sub-question if respondents would be interested in having their students participate if the single track were offered in selected schools (see results).

2) Multi Tracking - This option spreads the school year over the full calendar year, with no long “summer vacation”, but fairly equal “quarter vacations” (as does the single track), however the students participating would be in attendance at different time. Normally three “tracks” of students are in school, while the fourth track is out. For some holidays and a shorter “summer” vacation, all students would be out. This format does have the benefit of increasing building capacity by roughly one-third, as well as other favorable and unfavorable effects. The survey responses were 59.5% unfavorable or extremely unfavorable, and 17.3% being favorable or extremely favorable. The remainder was neutral/no opinion (16.6%) or no response (6.6%). A sub-question if respondents would be interested in having their students participate if the single track were offered in selected schools (see results).

3) Split Shift - This option shortens the attendance day to roughly 5 hours, and allows two “shifts” at a school building. If the shorter day is approved as a “full” day by the state, then theoretically, twice as many students could be educated in the existing facilities. This option was received the least favorably, with 77.0% unfavorable or extremely unfavorable, and 7.3% being favorable or extremely favorable. The remainder was neutral/no opinion (9.2%) or no response (6.6%).

The Year Round Education topic has been discussed in CAC groups for two years. Many of the variations and nuances of the different options take some time to explain and/or understand fully. Since the descriptions of the options in the survey were limited to a short paragraph each, many respondents might not have gotten a complete understanding of the options available. For instance, one of the main concerns that usually mentioned is “What if my children are in different ‘tracks’? We won’t be able to take vacations!” In truth, most (all?) schools using multi-tracking arrange to keep families in the same ‘track’. For all issues involved with Year Round Education to be understood, there needs to be open communications, dialogs, and questions district-wide before a final decision is made.

### The Impact of Year Round Education on the Family

Committee members doing research on the impact of Year Round Education on families were quick to notice there seems to be a lack of quantifiable information on the subject. The information available appears to be mostly anecdotal. We were hampered in our studies by lack of time, resources, and tools to gather information.

The group did consider many methods of gathering information. Among them:

- Phone, mail, and e-mail surveys to Unit 5 parents were considered too costly and/or not time effective enough to implement
- Implementation of another paper survey at the school level (like the one administered by the district during Parent-Teacher Conferences) was not a favorable alternative. There were concerns here on the preparation of an unbiased survey, and the interpretation of the results.
- Research of published scientific data was the preferred method.

In the research completed, the following themes arose multiple times:

- The family’s ability to secure after-school care during school session and full day-care during inter-sessions (Some studies seem to show that local day care providers learn to adapt to the new school schedule.)
- The family’s ability to juggle multiple children’s schedules who may end up on different tracks.
- The family’s ability to plan vacations during non-traditional break times, or if multiple children are on different tracks
- The student’s ability to participate in extra-curricular activities that follow a traditional format (summer baseball, for example).
- The student’s ability to secure summer employment, or partake in other traditional summer activities

Because YRE is controversial, there is an enormous amount of biased, “advocacy” information on both sides of the issue which tends to drown out more reliable information. Although there is information available on the internet, we found much of it of questionable value. However, searches for more scientific literature were also disappointing. We felt there was little available, and access to journal articles was hampered by paid-access and subscription barriers.

Will Scanlon (committee member) did cite several helpful articles. In particular, those cited in a review done by Palmer and Bemis that covers a large number of articles was beneficial. Palmer and Bemis discuss three articles relevant to the impact on families (Shields ’96, Pelavin ’79, and Fardig ’92). Of these three, only one is **both** remotely current and providing material data, Diana Fardig's 1992 article:

[http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content\\_storage\\_01/0000000b/80/26/2e/a5.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/26/2e/a5.pdf)

Shields’ article does present some data, but the data is not fully explained and even though Shields presents statistical tests, without more detail the data appears more limited than Fardig’s data. Pevalin’s article not only is out-dated (would not necessarily reflect parents’ concerns 26 years after it was written due to changes in social and economic demographics), but is also not unavailable to us.

Nevertheless, Fardig is not a scientific article and the relevant information is very limited. It consists of survey results of parental responses to questions on the ease of finding and arranging childcare and family vacations for three schools implementing YRE over a three-year period. This is not enough to form a firm conclusion. Fardig suggests (and Palmer and Bemis mention) that parents found these tasks “not as difficult as anticipated.” In any case, Fardig’s very limited data suggests the impact on families was negative in the short term, and negative (but less so) in the long term.

From this, we do not believe there is sufficient readily-available data to draw an informed conclusion. There may be enough data in the wider literature base, but (as mentioned) we were limited by access, availability and time. What little we did find was at best scientifically weak, the majority of it not published in scientific journals. Instead, it consisted of anecdotal evidence or small surveys of unknown methodology. Given this difficulty, we doubt there is a scientific consensus on the impact of YRE on families.

Both in our smaller sub-group, and in the larger CAC committee, we felt that there were many issues involved with Year Round Education that would need to be addressed if this were to be pursued as a possible option in Unit 5. In addition to more study, buy in from school families, school employees, and the community as a whole would be required for a successful implementation in McLean County. It’s not a “quick fix”, and would likely take several years to study, accept, and plan for.

Researching a multi-track year round school schedule for Unit 5 and considering the community impact go hand in hand. It is necessary to have community support to make this endeavor successful.

- How great an impact would it be on the community?
- What would community response be to such a change?

To get an accurate picture of the response and impact of the community we contacted members and businesses of the community. Surveys were created by Unit 5 and handed out at Parent Teacher Conferences to get input from parents. Another survey will be conducted with the McLean County Chamber of Commerce to learn if local business owners think year round school would impact their business. Lastly, interviews were conducted with Normal Parks and Recreation, Bloomington Parks and Recreation, and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network.

### **Unit 5 Survey results**

The survey conducted at Parent Teacher conferences in Fall 2006 had four questions related to year round schooling. The questions and results are listed here. It is evident parent/community support is lacking in these results.

#### *Survey Item 3*

A form of year-round schooling consists of a calendar in which the 180 days of school are arranged in four blocks of approximately nine weeks of instruction separated by vacation periods of approximately three-four weeks. These vacation periods in total are roughly equal to the traditional summer vacation, but are spread out in periods of shorter duration throughout the year. This approach has virtually no impact upon the capacity of our buildings to serve students. My opinion of this type of year-round schooling is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – <b>Extremely Unfavorable</b>	<b>524 (28.8%)</b>
2 – Unfavorable	416 (22.9%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	313 (17.2%)
4 – Favorable	375 (20.6%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	176 (9.7%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	16 (0.9%)

Average Response -2.59

#### *Survey Item 3a*

If this year-round schooling approach was offered at selected schools on an optional basis, would you be inclined to have your student(s) participate?

<u>Response (Yes, Possibly, No)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
Yes	316 (17.4%)
Possibly	546 (30%)
<b>No</b>	<b>825 (45.3%)</b>
No Response – Unanswered Item	133 (7.3%)

*Survey Item 4*

In another year-round schooling format, buildings are used for instruction nearly every week day throughout the entire calendar year. At any given time, approximately 75% of the students assigned to a school are in class while the other 25% are on vacation. Other than significant holidays and a short summer break, no common period would exist during which all students were on vacation at the same time. This approach increases the capacity of buildings by 33%. For example, a building designed to accommodate 600 students will be able to serve 800 students in this format. My opinion of this type of year-round schooling is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
<b>1 – Extremely Unfavorable</b>	<b>556 (30.5%)</b>
<b>2 – Unfavorable</b>	<b>528 (29.0%)</b>
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	302 (16.6%)
4 – Favorable	258 (14.2%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	56 (3.1%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	120 (6.6%)

Average Response -2.25

*Survey Item 4a*

If this year-round schooling approach was offered at selected schools on an optional basis, would you be inclined to have your student(s) participate?

<u>Response (Yes, Possibly, No)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
Yes	183 (10.1%)
Possibly	457 (25.1%)
<b>No</b>	<b>1002 (55.1%)</b>
No Response – Unanswered Item	178 (9.8%)

### **District 87 Year-Round Schooling Experience**

During one of our sub-group meetings, Paul O'Brien, former Principal at Stevenson school visited with the group to share their experiences when attempting to implement year-round school at his school. Highlights of that meeting included:

- Parents were at both ends of the spectrum, either they supported the idea 100% or opposed it 100%
- The goal of the study was to improve the quality of instruction for the children, rather than being economically based.
- Implementing the single track system will increase spending both in infrastructure (heating, air conditioning, custodial, meals, bussing, etc.) and if paid instructors (vs. volunteers) are used during the inter-sessions
- They investigated the single-track option only
- Lack of parent support most likely killed the study
- A continuous calendar is probably good for the students, but not good for the parents
- About 50% of Stevenson teachers wanted to try year-round schooling, with others from different schools in the district indicating interest to augment staffing
- Concern about pool of substitute teachers in this calendar approach
- Issue of day care was a concern
- Perception from Realtors that the value of homes would go down in an area with year-round schooling. Perhaps not a decrease in value, but fewer homes being placed on the market
- Conducted several Town Hall meetings; Felt the audiences moved from supportive to opposed as time progressed. Those opposed attended all the meetings, possibly swaying the other participants
- The study was done 6 years ago.

### **McLean County Chamber of Commerce findings**

The McLean County Chamber of Commerce (MCC) was asked to solicit feedback from local businesses on the potential impact to the business community. Citizen's Advisory Council and Chamber of Commerce representatives had a round table discussion on year round school to gain understanding of the issues and for a preliminary assessment of the impact to businesses.

The MCC conducted interviews with the Champaign Area Chamber of Commerce to gather information on impact to businesses when their local schools changed to a year round school schedule.

The interviews with Champaign area Chamber of Commerce indicated there were some minor impacts to personnel scheduling issues such as work schedules and vacations.

For the Champaign Park District, there were major disruptions in terms of:

- a decrease in profitability,
- restructuring of youth programs to accommodate new school breaks and
- unavailability of school facilities for some activities.

A positive impact was staffing schedules since Park District employees now did not want to take vacations all at the same time but began to take shorter vacations at differing times during the year to match the scheduled breaks from school. This relieved the high demand for vacation time during the traditional summer months. The hind sight was that the Park District should have been more involved with the year round school planning process to ease transition pains.

### **Normal Parks and Recreation**

After speaking with recreation supervisors at Normal Parks and Recreation it was concluded that while a year round school concept would impact recreation programs, the Parks and Recreation staff would adapt to accommodate various schedules and the community. However, this adaptation would take time and resources (staffing and monetary).

According to Recreation Supervisor Cary Frey, Normal Parks and Recreation would want to be involved in any serious conversations about moving to a year round schedule. And, if Unit 5 were to move to a year round schedule, Normal Parks and Recreation staff would have many planning sessions to address needed changes.

According to Before and After School Recreation Program Supervisor Tim Karmik, one of the largest impacts would be finding qualified, quality staff during the summer when most college students go home. Changing the staff to student ratio or employing high school students could resolve this problem. But Karmik feels the program would become less satisfactory the younger the staff gets. Depending on whether local high schools were part of the year round school concept, students may not be able to help.

Karmik added he feels the Before and After School Programs would not suffer as much as other Normal Parks and Recreation programs since scheduling could be more difficult for families who have children in different tracks at school.

### **Bloomington Parks and Recreation**

Barb Wells, the Superintendent of Recreation at Bloomington Parks and Recreation was contacted to see what impact a change in the school schedule could have on their programs. Barb said that at this point she feels the change to the multi-track school schedule would not have much impact on them. Since Bloomington consist of both Unit 5 and District 87 it would not affect all of the children that participate in their programs. Secondly, they currently schedule their summer day camps in 2 week blocks and their summer activities in 4 week blocks. Therefore, families would probably still sign up even if they could only go to the activities 3 of the 4 weeks. If Unit 5 actually adopted the new school schedule she said they would then sit down and take a look at their programs and decide what changes need to be made.

### **Child care**

Changing from a traditional summer break to more frequent three week breaks may have an affect on child care. Barb Jergen at the Child Care Resource and Referral Network feels the change would have a significant impact on child care providers and the way they do business. Larger child care facilities depend on help from college and high school students to run their programs for school aged children. Under the current school schedule college and high school students are on summer break when they need them and it works out perfectly. In a multi-track system there is no true summer break. The students would be in and out of school all year long making it difficult to find adequate help.

Fluctuation of students might also make it necessary for licensed child care providers to work more closely with the Department of Children and Family Services. They have strict rules on the staff/child ratio and would need to remain compliant to keep their license. With a multi-track system, the number of children attending may fluctuate making staffing challenging. If they hire enough people to cover during busier times, they are over staffed and would lose money during times where they may not have as many children. However, if they don't hire enough staff they won't be in compliance with the laws. This will require them to find a balance somehow.

## **Impact of Year-Round School on the District**

In order for a Year Round Education model to alleviate school overcrowding and extend building capacity, a multi-track concept is required. According to the National Association of Year Round Education (NAYRE), “multi-track divides students and teachers into groups, or tracks of approximately the same size. Teachers and students assigned to a particular track follow the same schedule and are in school and on vacation at the same time”.

Implementing a four-track calendar extends the capacity of a facility by 33%. A five-track calendar would result in an increase in capacity of 25%.

The following analysis uses projected Unit 5 attendance figures to determine how long current facilities would be sufficient if a multi-track Year Round calendar were implemented. Projections are included for both a four-track and five-track model. Separate analysis is done for elementary, junior high, and high school. The purpose of the analysis is to show at what point in time building capacity will be reached, even with the implementation of a Year Round calendar. Capacity for elementary schools is measured by numbers of classroom; for junior high and high school attendance projections are used.

### **Assumptions:**

- This analysis assumes all facilities (of the same type: elementary, junior high, or high school) implement at the same time. If implementation is phased in, or only occurs in selected buildings, capacity will be reached sooner.
- School attendance projections from Unit 5 were only available through 2013. Figures beyond 2013 were determined by calculating the average projected growth until 2013 and then applying that figure to subsequent years.
- This does not take into account portable classrooms, existing, or future expansion.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:**

Current number of classrooms available: 283

Number of classrooms available with four-track Year Round calendar (increase of 33%):  
376

Number of classrooms available with five-track Year Round calendar (increase of 25%):  
354

<b>Year</b>	<b>Classrooms Needed</b>	<b>Impact of Year Round Education Models</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>284</b>	NOTE: Projected classrooms needed exceeds current classrooms available (283)
2008	293	
2009	307	
2010	321	
2011	331	
2012	342	
2013	354	
<b>2014</b>	<b>366</b>	Projected classrooms needed exceeds classrooms available with five-track model (354)
<b>2015</b>	<b>378</b>	Projected classrooms needed exceeds classrooms available with four-track model (376)
2016	390	

## JUNIOR HIGHS :

Current capacity: 2950

Number of students accommodated with four-track Year Round calendar (increase of 33%): 3923

Number of students accommodated with five-track Year Round calendar (increase of 25%): 3688

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendance Projection</b>	<b>Impact of Year Round Education Models</b>
2007	2835	
<b>2008</b>	<b>2973</b>	NOTE: Projected attendance exceeds current building capacity available (2950)
2009	2984	
2010	3066	
2011	3159	
2012	3340	
2013	3441	
2014	3542	
2015	3643	
<b>2016</b>	<b>3744</b>	Projected attendance exceeds building capacity with five-track model (3688)
2017	3845	
<b>2018</b>	<b>3946</b>	Projected attendance exceeds building capacity with four-track model (3923)
2019	4047	

## HIGH SCHOOLS:

Current capacity: 3600

Number of students accommodated with four-track Year Round calendar (increase of 33%): 4788

Number of students accommodated with five-track Year Round calendar (increase of 25%): 4500

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendance Projection</b>	<b>Impact of Year Round Education Models</b>
2007	3362	
2008	3362	
2009	3456	
2010	3463	
<b>2011</b>	<b>3635</b>	NOTE: Projected attendance exceeds current

		building capacity available (3600)
2012	3709	
2013	3778	
2014	3848	
2015	3917	
2016	3987	
2017	4056	
2018	4125	
2019	4194	
2020	4264	
2021	4334	
2022	4403	
2023	4472	
<b>2024</b>	<b>4541</b>	Projected attendance exceeds building capacity with five-track model (4500)
2025	4611	
2026	4680	
2027	4750	
<b>2028</b>	<b>4819</b>	Projected attendance exceeds building capacity with four-track model (4788)
2029	4888	

**SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS:**

While the implementation of a multi-track Year Round Education calendar will extend building capacity, it is only a band-aid. Even with the district-wide implementation of a four-track model, which will increase building capacity by 33%, elementary schools will still run out of space by the year 2015. With the four-track model, the junior highs will exceed capacity in 2018. The building capacity of the high schools will be sufficient until 2028 with the implementation of the four-track model.

## Year Round School Cost Considerations

Our Citizens Advisory Group focused on financial impacts of year round school on the district. Analysis completed indicated that schools operating on a multi-track calendar could accommodate additional students but would also have financial costs tied to implementation of the program. Costs could be categorized into:

- Transition Costs
- Operating Costs
- Potential Construction Costs.

Transition costs are related to feasibility studies, administrative planning time and teacher in service training. As reported by *Southwest Educational Development Laboratory "Insights...on education policy and practice", March 1993 issue of Year-Round Education*

1. "The transition to a multi-track year round education program requires additional start up costs, and"
2. "the year-round education program typically serves as a catalyst for many changes not related to the program—changes that bear costs of their own."

Operating Costs are related to keeping a Year Round school open for approximately 242 days a year versus the standard normal 180 days. Costs are related to maintenance repair, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria personnel, nurses, counselors, bus drivers and other staff being made available the full twelve months. Analysis showed that many school districts found proportionate increases in salary and potential addition to staff to address increase personnel. As reported in *"Year -Round Education: A Strategy for Overcrowded Schools. ERIC/CUE Digest Number103."* the key financial measure should not be the additional costs but should be the per-pupil cost. On this standard, YRE schools have proven to be cost-effective. The Pajaro Valley (CA) School District converted five schools to YRE in 1971 because it had 15 percent more students than its schools could serve on the traditional nine month schedule. Five years later, the year-round schedule had achieved a 4.1 percent reduction in per-pupil costs (Glass, 1992).

*Staff Writer Lynda Zimmer of the News - Gazette reported in the 01/10/95 article "Cost of Yr-round school Figured"* reported the additional costs for one school to transition to year round education:

1. \$20,000 a year for more bus transportation
2. \$11,000 annually for staff time
3. \$19,000 for power bills

Articles reviewed indicated Year Round Education may be able to handle additional students but even with additional capacity school districts could be faced with potential construction costs. Growth projections within a community may exceed capacity even when Year Round Education is used within the district.

This was found to be the case within the Wake County area.

As reported by [www.wcpss.net/announcements/archives/2006/02/cost\\_to\\_avoid\\_t.htm/](http://www.wcpss.net/announcements/archives/2006/02/cost_to_avoid_t.htm/) Wake county school board and county commissioners discussed impacts to tax rate when comparing use of YRE to address an additional 40,000 students. They found that when comparing building new schools with traditional calendars solely to building schools with YRE calendars to address the mix, the difference in the tax rate was roughly four cents. *The following was reprinted from the article posted by Kristin Flenniken.*

“In costing out three scenarios, county officials said building mainly new schools would require a property tax increase of 11.1 cents for capital and operating the facilities, whereas converting all existing elementary and middle schools to a multi-track year-round calendar would require a 7.2-cent increase. Basically, it comes down to: Is it worth \$75 a year to go year-round?

	<b>Bond Amount</b>	<b>Tax Rate Increase for Capital</b>	<b>Tax Rate Increase for Operating the Facilities</b>	<b>Total Tax Rate Increase - Impact of Scenarios for Capital Programs</b>	<b>Total Annual Tax Increase on Median House in Wake (\$175,000)</b>
<b>Scenario A</b>	\$1.705 billion	7.9 cents	3.2 cents	11.1 cents	\$200/year
<b>Scenario B</b>	\$1.563 billion	6.5 cents	3.1 cents	9.6 cents	\$168/year
<b>Scenario C</b>	\$1.225 billion	3.4 cents	3.8 cents	7.2 cents	\$126/year

**Scenario A costs \$1.975 billion and includes:**

- Build 28 new schools (19 elementary, 6 middle and 3 high), with them opening on a mix of traditional and multi-track year-round calendars.
- Convert 10 existing elementary schools and 4 middle schools to year-round.
- Address renovation needs deferred from earlier building program proposals and all life-cycle maintenance needs.
- Provide recommended support facilities, technology infrastructure, and facility assessments and start-up funding for future projects.

**Scenario B costs \$1.797 billion and includes:**

- Build 22 new schools (14 elementary, 5 middle and 3 high), with all elementary and middle schools opening on the year-round calendar.
- Convert 7 existing elementary schools and 4 middle schools to year-round.
- Address renovation needs deferred from earlier building program proposals and all life-cycle maintenance needs.
- Provide recommended support facilities, technology infrastructure, and facility assessments and start-up funding for future projects.

**Scenario C costs \$1.375 billion and includes:**

- Build 9 new schools (5 elementary, 2 middle, 2 high), with all elementary and middle schools opening on the year-round calendar.
- Convert all existing traditional calendar elementary and middle schools to multi-track year-round calendars.
- Address renovation needs deferred from earlier building program proposals and all life-cycle maintenance needs.
- Provide recommended support facilities, technology infrastructure, and facility assessments and start-up funding for future projects.”

## **Impact of Year-Round Schooling on Student Achievement Excellence**

### Does Year-Round school improve students learning?

- Based on the current research it has been concluded that implementing a year-round calendar does not show any significant difference in achievement between students in a year-round and students in a traditional calendar.
- It has been discussed through studies that year-round innovations and organizational changes may influence student achievement. However, it is not known if calendar changes or team teaching/co operative learning increases student learning because adequate research hasn't been done to support these theories.
- Of the studies conducted, the differences in achievements are rarely significant from students within year around and students within a traditional calendar system.
- Currently, standardized test scores are used to measure students' educational achievement between calendar systems and year around schools. There has been no comparative study to consider other factors beyond standardized tests such as the consideration of higher-level thinking or problem-solving skills.
- Currently, year round schools are predominantly in disadvantaged communities in many American districts. If the goal of education is to maximize the number of students in poor areas who pass standardized tests in a cost-effective manner, then some year-round school systems can contribute to this goal.
- The evidence appears to be year-round schools are politically unacceptable in wealthier areas, and the arguments for educational gains are not taken seriously by the vast majority.

In conclusion, the research evidence reviewed supports that simply changing the pattern of the school year will not improve achievement or will do so slightly. However, if the school district wishes to consider changing from traditional calendar to year-round then they should be realistic in the expectations of the impact on achievement.

Finally, the study group had the opportunity to contact Kenwood Elementary School in Champaign, IL to gather information on their experiences they since the inception of a Year-Round program.

### Case Study:

Kenwood Elementary School in Champaign, Illinois, has participated in a Balanced School Year for the past 20 years. The name "Balanced School Year" means students have the same amount of days in school as a traditional school year. The only difference being the year begins in mid to late July, hence making a shorter summer. The holiday schedule during the school year is the same as the traditional with winter and spring break being the same and the year ending at approximately the same time.

The reason for implementing the Balanced School Year was purely academic. More than 20 years ago the faculty and the Unit 4 District wanted to address an alarming truancy and drop-out rate, low state and national test scores they were seeing at Kenwood, junior

high and high school levels. They began looking at other schools that had implemented a balanced school year program and decided to adopt it.

Kenwood's Balanced School Year consists of a '9 and 3 single track', which is nine weeks of school with three weeks off. The students/parents and faculty of Kenwood like the balanced year because of the "units" that are set up in the text books that get finalized before the three weeks off. The three weeks allow more travel time for longer family vacations. Also, the students seem to retain more information from the previous school year with a shorter summer.

The school and the district have been successful in maintaining this form of academic program and continue to sustain good state and national test scores. The drop-out rate and truancy rate has also decreased.

### **Conclusion**

While the Kenwood School District's experience with year-round education has been positive, it must be reiterated that the reasons they implemented year-round education are very different than Unit 5's situation, and their single-track solution would not be beneficial in addressing Unit 5's growth.

## References

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[http://www.cybersmartcurriculum.org/downloads/htm/SEDL-Insights\\_Year-Round\\_Education.htm](http://www.cybersmartcurriculum.org/downloads/htm/SEDL-Insights_Year-Round_Education.htm)

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"Year Round Schooling Promises and Pitfalls" by Carolyn Shields & Steven Lynn Oberg

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## Memorandum

To: Board of Education

From: Alan Chapman  
Superintendent

Date: November 29, 2006

Subject: **Results of October 27, 2006 Parent/Guardian Survey**

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A Parent/Guardian Survey addressing issues related to actual and projected growth in student enrollment was administered during the October 27, 2006 Parent-Teacher Conference Day.

A total of 1820 surveys were completed, compiled, and analyzed. A summary of the data collected from the Parent/Guardian Survey appears below. This summary reflects input from each school, with most schools providing approximately 2-5% of the total responses.

Survey items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were answered using a scale of 1 to 5 that was defined as follows:

- 1 - Extremely Unfavorable
- 2 - Unfavorable
- 3 - Neutral or No Opinion
- 4 - Favorable
- 5 - Extremely Favorable

Survey items 3a and 4a allowed respondents to provide a response of “yes”, “possibly”, or “no”.

The responses to the Parent/Guardian Survey were generally consistent across grade levels. Little variation was observed in responses submitted by parents/guardians of elementary, middle, and high school level students.

### **Survey Item 1**

Our current elementary class size target ranges are 20-25 for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 22-27 for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, and 24-29 for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Our average class size for all elementary sections, using these ranges, is 22.1. Increasing these ranges to 22-30 for Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and 24-32 for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades will raise this average to 24.5 and increase the capacity of our 283 classrooms by approximately 680 students. My opinion of increasing elementary class size is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – Extremely Unfavorable	767 (42.1%)
2 – Unfavorable	722 (39.7%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	169 (9.3%)
4 – Favorable	134 (7.4%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	16 (0.9%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	12 (0.7%)

***Average Response - 1.84***

**Survey Item 2**

We currently provide all-day Kindergarten in 42 classrooms. Current projections indicate that we will need 47 classrooms for Kindergarten in 2009, 51 in 2012, and 56 in 2015. Returning to a half-day Kindergarten program reduces this need by 35-40%, creating space for approximately 400 more students in 2009, 450 more in 2012, and 500 more in 2015. My opinion of returning to a half-day Kindergarten program is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – Extremely Unfavorable	541 (29.7%)
2 – Unfavorable	440 (24.2%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	368 (20.2%)
4 – Favorable	284 (15.6%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	172 (9.5%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	15 (0.8%)

***Average Response - 2.50***

**Survey Item 3**

A form of year-round schooling consists of a calendar in which the 180 days of school are arranged in four blocks of approximately nine weeks of instruction separated by vacation periods of approximately three-four weeks. These vacation periods in total are roughly equal to the traditional summer vacation, but are spread out in periods of shorter duration throughout the year. This approach has virtually no impact upon the capacity of our buildings to serve students. My opinion of this type of year-round schooling is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – Extremely Unfavorable	524 (28.8%)
2 – Unfavorable	416 (22.9%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	313 (17.2%)
4 – Favorable	375 (20.6%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	176 (9.7%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	16 (0.9%)

***Average Response - 2.59***

**Survey Item 3a**

If this year-round schooling approach was offered at selected schools on an optional basis, would you be inclined to have your student(s) participate?

<u>Response (Yes, Possibly, No)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
Yes	316 (17.4%)
Possibly	546 (30%)
No	825 (45.3%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	133 (7.3%)

**Survey Item 4**

In another year-round schooling format, buildings are used for instruction nearly every week day throughout the entire calendar year. At any given time, approximately 75% of the students assigned to a school are in class while the other 25% are on vacation. Other than significant holidays and a short summer break, no common period would exist during which all students were on vacation at the same time. This approach increases the capacity of buildings by 33%. For example, a building designed to accommodate 600 students will be able to serve 800 students in this format. My opinion of this type of year-round schooling is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – Extremely Unfavorable	556 (30.5%)
2 – Unfavorable	528 (29.0%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	302 (16.6%)
4 – Favorable	258 (14.2%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	56 (3.1%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	120 (6.6%)

***Average Response - 2.25***

**Survey Item 4a**

If this year-round schooling approach was offered at selected schools on an optional basis, would you be inclined to have your student(s) participate?

<u>Response (Yes, Possibly, No)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
Yes	183 (10.1%)
Possibly	457 (25.1%)
No	1002 (55.1%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	178 (9.8%)

**Survey Item 5**

A “split shift” schedule basically provides for one-half of all students to attend school in the morning and the other one-half to attend school in the afternoon. An example would be 7:00 am-12:00 pm and 12:30-5:30 pm. Virtually twice as many students could be served with the same building capacity. Instructional time would almost certainly be reduced. My opinion of a “split shift” schedule is:

<u>Response (1-5)</u>	<u>Number of Responses/(Percent of Total)</u>
1 – Extremely Unfavorable	919 (50.5%)
2 – Unfavorable	482 (26.5%)
3 – Neutral or No Opinion	167 (9.2%)
4 – Favorable	107 (5.9%)
5 – Extremely Favorable	26 (1.4%)
No Response – Unanswered Item	119 (6.5%)

***Average Response - 1.73***

**Comments or Suggestions Regarding Growth**

Of the 1820 survey respondents, 531 (29.2%) provided additional comments. Primary comment themes included, but were not limited to:

- requests for additional research and/or information sharing prior to implementing any of the ideas described in the survey instrument;
- justification for “extremely unfavorable” and “unfavorable” responses to survey items;
- input regarding potential referenda efforts;
- support of a traditional school vacation schedule; and
- concerns regarding the impact of ideas described in the survey instrument upon child care options.

*Note: Percentages and averages have been rounded.*