

2019-2020 Instructional Calendar

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Developing the CCPS calendar is a lengthy and thoughtful process that takes months to finalize. A 2019-2020 Instructional Calendar Committee comprised of teachers, administrators, support staff, and parents worked collaboratively to craft a calendar that reflects stakeholder feedback, meets VDOE and contractual mandates, and ultimately provides our Caroline students with ample learning opportunities. During the development process, the Committee utilizes the public comment period (12/14/18-12/28/18) to gather input from stakeholders. We encourage you to utilize this FAQ to familiarize yourself with the complexities of calendar creation. You are invited to provide feedback regarding the 2019-2020 “draft” calendar, which will be considered when the Committee finalizes a calendar for School Board review and approval.

What is the timeline for the development of a school calendar?

Developing and finalizing the school calendar takes approximately four months from start to finish. From November through February the steps involved in this process include: 1) Review calendar year to identify numerous considerations (holidays, professional development, workdays, parent-teacher conferences, etc.); 2) Verify new legislation in the General Assembly that may impact the school calendar; 3) Develop calendar committee to provide input on draft calendar(s); 4) Post draft calendar(s) for public review and comment; 5) Review feedback with Calendar Committee and make final modifications to recommended calendar; and 6) Present calendar recommended by Calendar Committee to Superintendent and the School Board for review and adoption.

Is there a minimum number of teaching days required by the state?

Yes. In accordance with state law, *Section 22.1-98 of the Code of Virginia*, all school divisions, must have at least 180 teaching days or 990 teaching hours in any school year. The CCPS Instructional Calendar is based on the 990 teaching hours requirement.

If the state requires a minimum number of 990 teaching hours, why does CCPS exceed this number?

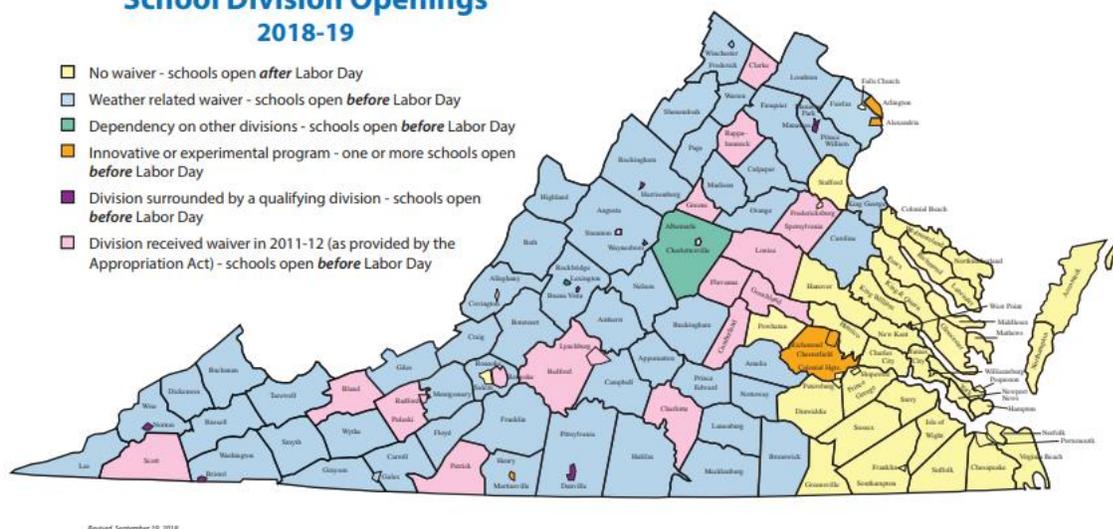
CCPS values instructional time. Exceeding the minimum competency requirement of 990 instructional hours enhances teaching and learning opportunities for students. An additional benefit to surpassing 990 instructional hours is a Division’s increased flexibility to use this time to assist with addressing lost instructional days related to inclement weather. Having “bank time” eliminates a Division’s need to extend the school day and/or year to meet the *Code of Virginia* requirement of 990 hours.

How does a School Division acquire a Pre-Labor Day Waiver to begin school prior to Labor Day?

In accordance with state law (*Section 22.1 79.1 of the Code of Virginia*) public schools are prohibited from starting school prior to Labor Day. The Virginia Board of Education only makes exceptions to this in cases where a school division has been closed an average of eight days per year during any five of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures or other emergencies.

The photo below demonstrates the statewide usage of the Pre-Labor Day Waiver. 90+ of 132 Virginia Divisions participate in the waiver process.

Virginia Department of Education
School Division Openings
2018-19



What are the unique highlights of the proposed 19-20 Instructional Calendars?

- Fall Break on October 14
- Three days for Thanksgiving Holiday/Break (Nov. 20-22)
- Two weeks for winter break (Dec. 23-Jan. 3 and return on Jan. 6)
- Early dismissal for Parent-Teacher Conferences (October 24)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences split ½ evening (February 13) and ½ morning (February 14) to provide flexibility for parents
- Consistent spring break (April 6-13)

Can we align our winter/spring breaks with neighboring divisions' vacation schedule(s)?

When possible, CCPS strives to align winter and spring breaks with our neighboring divisions. Please note that some neighbors to the North and in the Richmond area continue to begin school post-Labor Day. Caroline aims to complete our 1st semester prior to winter break, while ensuring compliance with VDOE mandates. Varied school start dates can make it challenging to align all CCPS vacation breaks with neighboring divisions.

During the 2017-2018 Calendar Review Process, the CCPS School Board approved a consistent spring break (first full week of April), which would remain constant for future instructional calendars. Selecting the first week of April for spring break aligns with calendar proposals being presented by many school divisions to our immediate South (Hanover, Henrico, Richmond City, Chesterfield, etc.)