

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOL CALENDARS

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Statutes give local boards of education powers of supervision and control of local school systems; and

WHEREAS, local control over establishing school calendars is an integral component of school system supervision and administrative powers with which local boards of education have been vested; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 the North Carolina General Assembly seized control of setting school calendars and imposed a one-size-fits-all mandate on how school calendars are to be set; and

WHEREAS, the current one-size-fits-all school calendar start date is no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 and the end date is no later than the Friday closest to June 11; and

WHEREAS, the State mandated late August start date means high schools do not complete the first semester until mid to late January; and

WHEREAS, the current law essentially requires high school students to take first semester exams after the winter break, which negatively impacts test scores, according to students and educators; and

WHEREAS, the second semester for high schools starts two to three weeks later than community colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, superintendents report that the calendar misalignment makes it nearly impossible for high school students or recent winter graduates to take courses at a nearby community college or university during the second semester; and

WHEREAS, exams for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes are given on the same day nationwide, and the current calendar law shortens the amount of time North Carolina's students have to learn the material before test day; and

WHEREAS, it is well-documented through multiple studies that children will experience a phenomenon known as summer learning loss, which has a disproportionate impact on low-income children; and

WHEREAS, long summer breaks can also negatively impact child nutrition, as low-income children who have access to regular meals at school through the free and reduced priced meal program may not have access to regular meals at home; and

WHEREAS, with little flexibility built in to the calendar, scheduling make-up days is extremely challenging; and

WHEREAS, major hurricanes and severe winter snow storms have caused Transylvania County Schools to miss 18 regular school days over the past three years; and

WHEREAS, fall sports and band begin August 1, schedules for extracurriculars have not changed to coincide with the State-mandated school calendar; and

WHEREAS, local boards of education are best equipped to understand the balancing act of meeting the community's needs and maximizing student success; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Transylvania County Board of Education requests the North Carolina General Assembly to restore local control of school calendars to best meet the calendar preferences of the families, educators, and businesses in our community while allowing for innovative experimental approaches to improve student achievement.

ADOPTED this the 22nd day of January 2019.

Chairman

Secretary