

Task Force to Study a Post-Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools

Final Report



**Annapolis, Maryland
June 2014**

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**Task Force to Study a Post-Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public
Schools
2013 Membership Roster**

William Cappe, Maryland State Department of Education, **Chairman**

Senator John C. Astle
Ms. Colleen Benda
Mr. Paul C. Edwards
Mr. Benjamin S. Feshbach
Ms. Monica Goldson
Ms. Madeline Hanington
Mr. G. Hale Harrison
Mr. Michael E. Haynie, Sr.
Delegate Anne Healey
Ms. Julie L. Marker
Senator James N. Mathias
Mr. William C. Meagher, III
Mr. Howard M. Mosner
Delegate LeRoy E. Myers, Jr.
Ms. Marla Posey-Moss
Ms. Shandria M. Proctor
Ms. Mary Jo Richmond
Mr. Greg Shockley

Maryland State Department of Education Staff

Dr. Kristine Angelis
Ms. Sarah Spross

Task Force Charge and Process

Charge:

The Task Force shall study the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on the following areas:

- (1) The education system, including the academic calendar, planning, administration, and facilities use;
- (2) The economy; and
- (3) Summer tourism.

On or before June 30, 2014, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with §2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly. (Appendix I)

Process:

To effectively and efficiently manage its charge, at the first meeting, members were divided into three workgroups, each responsible for focusing on one aspect of the Task Force charge. Each group was responsible for using the data provided to all Task Force members and to independently collect additional data to formulate sub-recommendations to be presented to the full Task Force as related to their assigned topic. The Task Force workgroup assignments are found on page 6.

Initial meetings were rich with materials and presentations by speakers suggested by Task Force members and the Task Force chair to facilitate their work. Materials included numerous newspaper articles, studies from a number of other states that have either implemented or considered a post-Labor Day start date; calendar data from the Maryland State Department of Education, state laws and regulations pertaining to school years; and speakers from a wide variety of stakeholder groups. Task Force members were given the opportunity to request additional speakers or information from the Task Force chair and staff.

Beginning in January, the workgroups were given time to discuss their topic and how to use the information provided and to identify additional information needed to make clear and concise sub-recommendations concerning the impact of moving the start date of public schools to a post-Labor Day start date.

In April and May, the workgroups presented their sub-recommendations to the full Task Force and the Task Force adopted its final recommendation.

Task Force Workgroup Assignments

Workgroup 1: Study the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on the education system, including the academic calendar, planning, administration, and facilities use.

Ms. Monica Goldson	Local School System	Prince George's County
Mr. Michael E. Haynie, Sr.	Business	Baltimore City
Ms. Mary Jo Richmond	MSEA	Frederick County
Mr. Benjamin S. Feshbach	Student	Montgomery County
Ms. Marla Posey-Moss	Elementary School Parent	Harford County
Senator John C. Astle	Elected Official	Anne Arundel County

Workgroup 2: Study the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on the economy.

Ms. Colleen Benda	Local School System: Teacher	Anne Arundel County
Ms. Madeline Hanington	Local School System: Teacher	Montgomery County
Mr. Howard M. Mosner	Business	Carroll County
Mr. William C. Meagher, III	Business	Garrett County
Ms. Julie L. Marker	Middle School Parent	Frederick County
Delegate Anne Healey	Elected Official	Prince George's County

Workgroup 3: Study the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on summer tourism.

Mr. Paul C. Edwards	Local School System	Garrett County
Mr. G. Hale Harrison	Business	Worcester County
Mr. Greg Shockley	MD Tourism Development Board	Worcester County
Ms. Shandria M. Proctor	High School Parent	Baltimore County
Senator James N. Mathias	Elected Official	Somerset, Worcester, & Wicomico Counties
Delegate LeRoy E. Myers, Jr.	Elected Official	Washington & Allegany Counties

Summary of Meetings

September 17, 2014

This was the first meeting of the Task Force with 16 members present. William Cappe, chair and Sarah Spross, Task Force staff opened the meeting with introductions and expectations. The Task Force was also greeted by Senator James Mathias and Senator John Astle. Senator Mathias introduced Senate Bill 963, the legislation passed by the General Assembly, which created the Task Force.

Mr. Cappe advised the Task Force members that the Task Force is considered to be a public body and, under the Open Meetings Act, the work conducted must be done in the open and must be transparent to the public. He counseled members to expect observers at the meetings and advised the group that there will be time for public comment at some meetings.

Mr. Cappe introduced the charge: The Task Force shall study the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on the following areas: the education system including the academic calendar, planning, administration and facilities use; the economy; and summer tourism. The members of the Task Force were divided into three groups of six members, each group responsible for one prong of the Task Force charge. The groups were advised that each would be responsible for completing their portion of the report which is due to the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates on or before June 30, 2014. (Appendix II)

Materials of Interest

At this meeting, the Task Force members were given 25 documents including Senate Bill 936, the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article Section 7-103, COMAR 13A.02.01.04 Length of School Year, COMAR 13A.03.02.12 General Provisions, the 2013-2014 Public School Openings and Closing Dates, a chart of the public school start and end dates for the last ten years, school system closures during the 2009-2010 school year, the Maryland Public Schools' Air Conditioning Study, the Comptroller's Study of the Economic Impact of a Post Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools, Bureau of Revenue Estimates, August 14, 2013, and 15 various newspaper articles on the topic of a Post-Labor Day start date. (Appendix III)

November 12, 2013

This was the second meeting of the Task Force with 17 members present. Eight speakers were invited to present information and to respond to questions at this meeting.

Ms. Teresa Tudor, Senior Manager, Office of Schools and Family Partnerships, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, presented the process used to develop school calendars explaining that there is a school calendar committee established by school board policy, representing local stakeholders. Members on the committee consist of community members, business leaders, parents, teachers, the Special Education Advisory Board and students. They generally prepare

calendars for two years in advance which they take to the local board for approval. The school system has 4 separate unions representing their employees and these unions have a strong voice when it comes to school calendars. She also stated that most of the parents indicate they do not want school to be in session in late June.

Mr. Edward Sparks, Executive Director, Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, summarized the COMAR Regulations on Interscholastic Athletics in the State and highlighted the changes affecting fall sports. He stated that athletics are one of the most visible aspects of schools and athletics make a significant impact on schools both in student participation and revenues generated. He stated it is difficult to change the sports calendar without experiencing consequences. For example, if contracts with the coaches are moved forward three days, it is estimated that that it will cost an additional \$450,000 in per diem costs over and above the negotiated contracts.

Mr. Ray Leone, President, Maryland Parent Teacher Association (PTA), indicated that when parents are asked about school start dates, there is a myriad of different responses; however, it probably is a 60/40 split in favor of starting school before Labor Day. Parents are looking for consistency in their district.

Mr. David Reel, President and CEO, Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association, stated that his organization supports the post-Labor Day start date as long as it is not at the expense of education. He stated that Virginia starts school after Labor Day and their English/language arts and mathematics test scores are higher than those districts that begin before Labor Day.

Mr. Thomas Noonan, CEO, Visit Maryland, stated that a 3 month tourist season is stronger than a 2 ½ month season and a post-Labor Day start date is good for revenue, tourism and jobs. He cites surveys from Texas (December 2000), South Carolina (August 2002), Florida (January 2003), Tennessee (January 2008) and a study “Do Families Vacation More in the Summer When School Starts After Labor Day?” (July 23, 2012).

Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education, stated that his organization is responsive to local boards of education. He states it is important to remember that if schools begin later, the calendar will be extended at the end of the year.

Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges, stated that each school district has a different set of values, and what is right for one may not be right for another. He questioned whether the State should be in the business of dictating calendar policy to local school districts. Local school systems have been able to use a flexible school calendar when negotiating employment issues such as pay increases or other issues affecting employees. High school students wishing to participate in courses at community colleges could be adversely affected by a later start date as courses begin earlier at these insistitutions.

Dr. Carl Roberts, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), stated that all 24 school systems are opposed to any legislation to remove local decision making regarding the school calendar from the local boards of education. A letter dated November 6, 2013 from Dr. Michael Martirano, President of PSSAM, was given to the Task Force members. He stated that it is important to look at year-round learning and it is important to study the school calendar and the school day structure to meet the needs of students. (Appendix IV)

Materials of Interest

At this meeting, Task Force members were given Student Testing Calendars for 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, three additional newspaper articles, and 2 letters for consideration. (Appendix V)

January 7, 2014

This was the third meeting of the Task Force with 13 members present. Three speakers were invited to present information and to respond to questions at this meeting. This meeting also had time allocated for public comment.

Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools stated that 83% of students statewide are ranked as proficient with Maryland having an 85% graduation rate. She related that Education Article 4-101 states that educational matters affecting the local school systems are to be under the control of the local boards of education. Further, students are required to attend school a minimum of 180 days within a 10 month period and a minimum of either 1,080 hours (elementary) or 1,170 hours (high school). Local boards and school systems have total responsibility for determining their school calendars which support the needs and preferences of their local community. Dr. Lowery stated that she is in favor of local school systems having the flexibility of local control in determining their school calendars.

Dr. Michael Martirano, Superintendent, St. Mary's County Public Schools, and President, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), stated that he sees a need to increase the economic engine of the State but is concerned with the academic needs and achievement of students. He questioned whether this is the vehicle to better serve student achievement. He discussed the plight of disadvantaged students and suggests that changing the start date will not address the gap in education experienced by these students, it just shifts the gap. By pushing the start back to after Labor Day, schools may end up adding days on to the calendar if we experience severe weather, moving the end of school into late June. Further, he stressed that all 24 local school superintendents are opposed to a post-Labor Day start date.

Mr. Franklin Chaney, Chief of Recreational Services, Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks, described how Recreation and Parks works with the Anne Arundel County Board of Education to utilize each other's facilities and provided the Task Force members with the Department's Joint Use Agreement and Guidelines and Reference Manual.

His Department provides services to more than 3,000 children in their programs including summer camps, before and after school care and sports programs. If the post-Labor Day start date is implemented, he believes there may be a shortage of college students employed in camp programs because they will be returning to college.

This meeting had one hour allocated to public comment during which no one participated. During this meeting, Task Force members requested that Union officials be invited to attend the next meeting. Also during this meeting, the format for the final report to the Governor was discussed. Each group would be given a section to report on as part of the final recommendation(s) to the Governor.

There was discussion on the need to expedite the Task Force process in order to submit the report before the legislative session ended. It was concluded that all members should be present in order to move this recommendation forward. It was decided at this meeting that it would be beneficial to have a workgroup meeting prior to the scheduled February meeting. (Appendix VI)

Materials of Interest

At this meeting, Task Force members were given the letter from PSSAM, five newspaper articles and a copy of the reports referred by Mr. Noonan at the November 12, 2013 meeting. (Appendix VII)

January 27, 2014

A workgroup meeting was held with 12 members present. This meeting afforded the opportunity to the members to work in their small groups in order to begin formulating their recommendations.

February 5, 2014

This was the fourth meeting of the Task Force with 11 members present. Two speakers were invited to present information and to respond to questions at this meeting.

Mr. Ryan Burbey, President, Harford County Education Association, stated the 180 day school year requirement is a floor and not a ceiling. This year teachers are in the midst of educational reform and the calendar becomes more critical. Teachers use the available days and available blocks of time between tests to prepare students. Mr. Burbey suggested a “pilot program” for a post-Labor Day start date using a few key counties to determine if there are any economic benefits.

Mr. Randy Mickens, Organizational Specialist, Lobbyist, Maryland State Education Association, stated that K-12 public education has a significant impact on local and regional economies. On the Eastern Shore, education is an economic driver and changes to the school calendar will affect local economies.

Ms. Joy Schaefer, President, Frederick County Board of Education, was to present information at this meeting but due to weather conditions and school obligations, she could not be present. Her letter opposed to the post-Labor Day start date was read into the record.

The groups provided an update of their reports. **Group 1 (Education)** reported that all members are not in agreement. They report that 89% of the schools across the state have air-conditioning and they may want to recommend giving a jurisdiction an “opt out”. **Group 2 (Economy)** struggled with the concept of economy and tourism. They are looking at other states, as well as Maryland, in relation to sales tax and income tax. They want to consider tourism issues across the state to include county fairs, state parks, battlefields, summer jobs and the horse industry, to name a few. They will reach out to the Comptroller’s Office for more information. **Group 3 (Summer Tourism)** will use the Comptroller’s report and reach out to Six Flags, the Orioles and the Aquarium for information. They will also look at gaming when statistics are more available. They would like to find the 10 top attractions in Maryland.

A motion was made at this meeting for the Task Force to recommend a start date no earlier than August 25, and a school end date no later than June 10. This is a compromise that allows for flexibility, but concerns were raised about the end dates while maintaining the 180 day school year requirement. After discussion, the sponsor withdrew the motion. (Appendix VIII)

Materials of Interest

At the time of this meeting, 14 letters from local superintendents and boards of education had been received; all opposing the post-Labor Day start date. The letters were not read, but copies were given to each of the Task Force members. Additionally, documents including newspaper articles, school calendar updates regarding missed days due to inclement weather, research on state laws and school start dates across the country, current updates on the reports from Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin and Minnesota, which were submitted at the last meeting, and Maryland hotel occupancy rates for 2012 were provided to Task Force members. (Appendix IX)

March 24, 2014

This was the fifth meeting of the Task Force with 15 members present. The date for this meeting was changed from Wednesday, March 5, 2014 to Monday, March 24, 2014 to accommodate schedules of several Task Force members.

This meeting provided members of the workgroups the opportunity to meet and discuss their recommendations and to provide their findings to the entire Task Force. It was suggested that the workgroups collect the information to formulate their recommendations, including all supporting documents, and provide this to the Chair electronically by April 7, 2014 to be considered for the final report.

Workgroup 1-Education recommended, in part, that school systems should move forward to ensure that 75% of the school facilities have air conditioning. Those with less than 75% would be exempt until 2017. The group recommended amending the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article 7-103 to withdraw the Monday after Easter as a holiday. They also requested that school systems shall allow unions to negotiate how and when teachers can receive professional development to contribute to their professionalism. Workgroup 2- Economy discussed the development of an outline in which to present their final submission. They discussed gathering statewide data and constructing a map of the state listing, among other venues, state parks, battlefields, gaming, etc. Workgroup 3-Tourism discussed compiling data for their final report and using information from the Comptroller's report, from the studies provided and information from local attractions. (Appendix X)

Materials of Interest

Five articles of interest were provided as well as additional letters received by the Chair of the Task Force from various Superintendents and local board members opposed to a post-Labor Day start date. (Appendix XI)

April 23, 2014

This was the sixth meeting of the Task Force with 12 members present. It was the intent to have a draft report available for discussion at this meeting; however, no information was provided by the work groups for the report to be started. The Task Force members were asked to submit their completed reports by April 25, 2014 so that a comprehensive report could be discussed. It was stated that such a report is a draft, and is confidential. (Appendix XII)

Materials of Interest

Six charts providing historical information regarding school system closures due to inclement weather from 2008-2012 were provided to the Task Force members. Additionally, one newspaper article discussing a poll taken for a post-Labor Day start date was provided. (Appendix XIII)

May 19, 2014

This was the final meeting of the Task Force with 15 members present. Time was allocated on the agenda for the workgroups to meet and to report out their recommendation(s) to the entire group. All three workgroups reported out and the discussions are reflected in the May 19, 2014 minutes. Each group was advised that the Task Force staff would like to finalize the report and asked that the work groups provide their written comments and requested changes before the meeting adjourned.

It was discussed whether there would be a single recommendation from the Task Force or whether each workgroup would make recommendations for their charge. This question has been asked before, and again, the chair stated that this decision would be up to the members.

A motion was made and seconded that the Task Force recommend to the Governor, a post-Labor Day start date for Maryland public schools. A call was made for discussion. There was no discussion. A call for the vote on the motion was made. Senator Astle, Ms. Benda, Ms. Hanington, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Haynie, Delegate Healey, Senator Mathias, Mr. Meagher, Delegate Myers, Ms. Posey-Moss, Ms. Proctor and Mr. Shockley voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Marker, Ms. Richmond and Mr. Cappe voted against the motion. The motion carried with 12 votes for and 3 votes against. Ms. Posey-Moss asked to reconsider her vote to change it to a no. No further action was taken by members of the Task Force on her request and no motion was made to permit Ms. Posey-Moss to change her vote.

A motion was made and seconded to appoint one member from each workgroup to assist with information for the cover letter. A call was made for a vote on this motion. Senator Astle, Ms. Hanington, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Haynie, Ms. Marker, Senator Mathias, Delegate Myers, Ms. Proctor, Ms. Richmond and Mr. Shockley voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Benda and Ms. Posey-Moss voted against the motion. Delegate Healey and Mr. Meagher abstained. The vote carried with 10 votes for, 2 against, and 2 abstentions. The individuals named to assist were Mr. Meagher, Mr. Shockley and Mr. Haynie.

A third motion was made and seconded to recommend that Easter Monday be rescinded from holidays mandated for local school systems. There was discussion about the far reaching nature of this motion and whether it was part of the charge before the Task Force. After further discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

The Chair thanked the members of the Task Force for their participation, and also thanked Ms. Sarah Spross and Dr. Kris Angelis for their valuable assistance throughout the process.
(Appendix XIV)

Meeting Attendance

Name	9/17/13	11/12/13	1/7/14	2/5/14	3/24/14	4/23/13	5/19/14
Senator John Astle, Dist. 30 Anne Arundel County	X	Abs	Abs	Abs	Abs	Abs	X
Colleen Benda, Teacher Anne Arundel County Schools	X	X	X	X	X	Abs	X
Paul C. Edwards Garrett County Public Schools	X	X	X	X	X	X	Abs
Benjamin S. Feshback, Student Montgomery County Public Schools	X	Abs	Abs	Abs	X	Abs	Abs
Monica Goldson Prince George's County Public Schools	X	X	X	Abs	X	X	Abs
Madeline Hanington, Teacher Montgomery County Public Schools	X	X	Abs	Abs	X	X	X
G. Hale Harrison, Business Worcester County	X	X	Abs	X	Abs	Abs	X
Michael E. Haynie, Sr., Business Baltimore City	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Delegate Anne Healey, Dist. 22 Prince George's County	Abs	X	X	X	Abs	X	X
Julie L. Marker, Parent (Middle School Parent) Frederick County	X	X	Abs	X	X	X	X
Senator James N. Mathias, Dist. 38 Somerset, Worcester, Wicomico	X	X	X	Abs	X	X	X
William C. Meagher, III, Business Garrett County	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Howard M. Mosner, Business Carroll County	X	X	X	Abs	X	Abs	Abs
Delegate LeRoy E. Myers, Jr., Dist. 1C, Allegany, Washington Cty.	Abs	X	Abs	Abs	Abs	Abs	X
Marla Posey-Moss, Parent (Elem. School Parent) Harford County	X	X	X	Abs	X	X	X
Shandria M. Proctor, Parent (High School) Baltimore County	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mary Jo Richmond, MSEA Frederick County	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greg Shockley, MD Tourism Development Board, Worcester County	Abs	X	X	X	X	Abs	X
William Cappe, Chairman, MSDE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sarah Spross, Co-Chair, MSDE	X	X	X	X	X	X	Abs

History of Maryland School Start Dates

This data was compiled from calendar records maintained by the Maryland State Department of Education and from information provided to the Task Force members

For the 2000-2001 school year, Labor Day was September 4, 2000. Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford County, Montgomery County, and Worcester County began school on September 5, 2000. Wicomico County began school on September 6, 2000. One system began school on August 24, 2000; fifteen systems began school on August 28, 2000; and two systems began school on August 29, 2000.

For the 2001-2002 school year, Labor Day was September 3, 2001. Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Wicomico County and Worcester County began school on September 4, 2001. Sixteen systems began school on August 27, 2001; one system began school on August 28, 2001; and one system began school on August 30, 2001.

For the 2002-2003 school year, Labor Day was September 2, 2002. Baltimore City, Wicomico County and Worcester County began school on September 3, 2002. Seventeen systems began school on August 26, 2002; three systems began school on August 27, 2002; and one system began school on August 28, 2002.

For the 2003-2004 school year, Labor Day was September 1, 2003. Baltimore City, Somerset County, Wicomico County and Worcester County began school on September 2, 2003. One system began school on August 20, 2003; fourteen systems began school on August 25, 2003; four systems began school on August 26, 2003; and one system began school on August 28, 2003.

For the 2004-2005 school year, Labor Day was September 6, 2004. Baltimore City, Somerset County, Wicomico County and Worcester County began school on September 7, 2004. Three systems began school on August 23, 2004; one system began school on August 24, 2004; two systems began school on August 25, 2004; four systems began school on August 26, 2004; and ten systems began school on August 30, 2004.

For the 2005-2006 school year, Labor Day was September 5, 2005. Somerset County and Worcester County began school on September 6, 2005. One system began school on August 22, 2005; two systems began school on August 23, 2005; two systems began school on August 24, 2005; four systems began school on August 25, 2005; ten systems began school on August 29, 2005; and three systems began school on August 30, 2005.

For the 2006-2007 school year, Labor Day was September 4, 2006. Somerset County and Worcester County began school on September 5, 2006. One system began school on August

21, 2006; two systems began school on August 22, 2006; two systems began school on August 23, 2006; one system began school on August 24, 2006; fourteen systems began school on August 28, 2006; and two systems began school on August 29, 2006.

For the 2007-2008 school year, Labor Day was September 3, 2007. Worcester County began school on September 4, 2007. One system began school on August 20, 2007; two systems began school on August 22, 2007; fifteen systems began school on August 27, 2007; four systems began school on August 28, 2007; and one system began school on August 29, 2007.

For the 2008-2009 school year, Labor Day was September 1, 2008. Worcester County began school on September 2, 2008. Three systems began school on August 20, 2008; seventeen systems began school on August 25, 2008; and three systems began school on August 26, 2008.

For the 2009-2010 school year, Labor Day was September 7, 2009. No school systems began school after Labor Day. One system began school on August 19, 2009; eight systems began school on August 24, 2009; four systems began school on August 25, 2009; two systems began school on August 26, 2009; one system began school on August 27, 2009; seven systems began school on August 31, 2009; and one system began school on September 1, 2009.

For the 2010-2011 school year, Labor Day was September 6, 2010. No systems began school after Labor Day. One system began school on August 18, 2010; five systems began school on August 23, 2010; four systems began school on August 24, 2010; four systems began school on August 25, 2010; nine systems began school on August 30, 2010; and one system began school on August 31, 2010.

For the 2011-2012 school year, Labor Day was September 5, 2011. No systems began after Labor Day. Three systems began school on August 22, 2011; two systems began school on August 23, 2011; seven systems began school on August 24, 2011; eleven systems began school on August 29, 2011; and one system began school on August 30, 2011.

For the 2012-2013 school year, Labor Day was September 3, 2012. No systems began school after Labor Day. One system began school on August 20, 2012; three systems began school on August 21, 2012; three systems began school on August 22, 2012; and seventeen systems began school on August 27, 2012.

For the 2013-2014 school year, Labor Day was September 2, 2013. No systems began school after Labor Day. Two systems began school on August 19, 2013; one system began school on August 20, 2013; two systems began school on August 21, 2013; one system began school on August 22, 2013; seventeen systems began school on August 26, 2013; and one system began school on August 27, 2013.

Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on the Education System

Introduction

The education system workgroup was responsible for studying the impact of a post-Labor Day start date on the education system including: the academic calendar, planning, administration, and facilities use. Based on a thorough review of the information provided by Task Force staff and additional materials supplied by the workgroup; the workgroup made three sub-recommendations.

Statewide Data

Data Provided by Education System Workgroup

- Education System workgroup report (Appendix XV)

Laws and Regulations

- Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §7-103 (Appendix III)
- COMAR 13A.02.01.04 Length of School Year (Appendix III)
- COMAR 13A.03.02.12 General Provisions (Appendix III)
- COMAR 13A.06.03 Interscholastic Athletics in the State (Appendix V)

Speakers

- Ms. Teresa Tudor, Senior Manager, Office of School and Family Partnerships, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Edward F. Sparks, Executive Director, Maryland Secondary Schools Athletic Association (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Ray Leone, President, Maryland Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) (Appendix IV)
- Mr. David Reel, President and CEO, Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Thomas Noonan, CEO, Visit Baltimore (Appendix IV)
- Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Carl Roberts, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, State Superintendent, Maryland State Department of Education (Appendix VI)
- Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, St. Mary's County Public Schools and President of PSSAM(Appendix VI)

- Mr. Franklin Chaney, Chief of Recreation Services, Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks (Appendix VI)
- Mr. Ryan Burbey, President, Harford County Education Association (Appendix VIII)
- Mr. Randy Mickens, Organizational Specialist, Lobbyist Maryland State Education Association (Appendix VIII)

General Information

- Chart, 2013-2014 Public Schools' Opening and Closing Dates (Appendix III)
- Chart, Public School Start and End Dates: Ten Years of Historical Data (Appendix III)
- Chart, School System Closures December 2009 – February 2010 (Appendix III)
- Article, Labor Day in the United States (Appendix III)
- Chart, Maryland Public Schools Air Conditioning Survey (Appendix III)
- November 6, 2013 Letter from the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (Appendix V)
- Student Testing Calendar Years 2013-2014 through 2015-2016 (Appendix V)
- 2014-2015 State Testing Calendar (Based on current school start date of last week in August) (Appendix V)
- September 18, 2013 Email from Mary Jo Richmond, Task Force Member (Appendix V)
- September 25, 2013 Letter from Ms. Susan L. Jones, Executive Director, Hotel, Motel, Restaurant Association, Inc. Ocean City, Maryland (Appendix V)
- Chart, December 2013 and January 2014 Inclement Weather Days (Appendix IX)
- 2011-2012 School Start Dates Map (Appendix IX)
- States with School Start Date Laws – Updated July 31, 2012 (Appendix IX)
- Required School Days, Instructional Hours Required Yearly and School Start Dates (Appendix IX)
- State Regulatory Requirements for Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Minnesota, Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa (Appendix IX)
- Chart, December 2013 through March 2014 Inclement Weather Days (Appendix XI)
- Letters received from local school systems and local boards of education (Appendix XI)
- Chart 1: 2008-2009 Public Schools Opening and Closings (Appendix XIII)
- Chart 2: Closures for Storm Flooding November 2009 (Appendix XIII)
- Chart 3: Closures for Blizzards of December 2009 and February 2010 (Appendix XIII)
- Chart 4: 2010-2011 School Closings Due to Inclement Weather (Appendix III)
- Chart 5: Closures for Hurricane Irene August 2011 (Appendix XIII)
- Chart 6: Closures for Hurricane Sandy October 2012 (Appendix XIII)

Studies/Reports

- “Economic Impact of the Publicly Funded K-12 Education on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in FY 2013” Business Economic and Community Outreach Network at Salisbury University (Appendix III)

News Articles

- One week and counting, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 19, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Shorter school summer break is better policy, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Saving summer at the expense of student learning, *The Washington Post*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Year-round school would benefit kids, economy, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 27, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Summer programs needed to boost student achievement, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 27, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Our say: Delaying school’s start a backward-looking idea, *Capital Gazette*, August 23, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Franchot’s school proposal doesn’t hold water, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 22, 2013 (Appendix III)
- A later start to school year worth a look, *Gazette*, September 13, 2013 (Appendix V)
- Coalition wants Montgomery County schools to close on Muslim holidays, *Gazette*, September 18, 2013 (Appendix V)
- Mathias optimistic about post-holiday school start committee, *The Dispatch*, October 4, 2013 (Appendix V)
- Task Force debating delaying school year to after Labor Day, *Fox 45 News*, November 12, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Muslim holidays not added to Montgomery school calendar, *Gazette*, November 12, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Montgomery schools take no action on Muslim holidays, *The Washington Post*, November 16, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Franchot continues push for post-Labor Day school start, *Southern Maryland News Papers Online*, December 13, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Franchot should stop meddling, *Southern Maryland News Papers Online*, December 18, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Lowery says school districts need autonomy on start of school year, *Baltimore Sun*, January 7, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Critics question proposed Howard school calendar, *Baltimore Sun*, January 10, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Baltimore-area school districts running out of school days, *WBAL-TV*, January 22, 2014 (Appendix IX)

- Let's stop whining about school snow closures, *The Washington Post*, January 23, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Days after the snow, school delays continue, *The Washington Post*, January 23, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Schools out again, but just wait until June, *The Star Democrat*, January 23, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Texas schools' later start means big savings on utilities, *Pearland News*, August 21, 2008 (Appendix IX)
- School Start Dates, *Texas Association of School Boards*, Governmental Relations 2012 (Appendix IX)
- School start date has no bearing on tourism, *The Gaffney Ledger*, February 18, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Area Boards Want State OK to Start School Before Labor Day B.P Smith, Lawmakers Back Early Start to Improve Academics, *Belle Plaine Herald*, January 28, 2014(Appendix IX)
- Minnesota's school start date spurs fights, *Star Tribune*, January 20, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- VA. Senate panel protects post-Labor Day school law, *The Roanoke Times*, February 14, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Delegates offer new approaches to Labor Day school debate, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, February 3, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Lawmakers Propose Changes in Mandatory School Start Law, *WUWM News Radio*, June 26, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- *Neighborhood News Service Milwaukee*, September 16, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- School Leader Explains to Tourism Officials Why He Opposes Change To Post-Labor Day Start, *The Dispatch*, February 6, 2014 (Appendix XI)
- Worcester OKs Post-Labor Day Start To School; County Will Be Only One in Md. *The Dispatch*, February 20, 2014 (Appendix XI)
- Poll to Gauge Opinion on Post-Labor Day School Start, *The Dispatch*, March 20, 2014 (Appendix XIII)

Data Analysis

All 24 local school system superintendents, the State Superintendent, union representatives, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, and the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland are opposed to a post-Labor Day start date. Speakers emphasized the need for local control to address the unique needs of each local jurisdiction. Each school system is presented with different geographical issues, community business needs, family socio-economic status, school system facility issues, and most importantly, the unique needs of their student population that drives the calendar decision making process.

Task Force members learned that each local school system has a calendar planning committee that is comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, union representatives, community

members and local business members. Frequently, these committees also have special interest groups represented as well. In many instances, these committees develop multiple year calendars. Mandated holidays, negotiated agreement calendar issues, and non-negotiable test dates are the starting points. Once these dates are placed on the calendar, each local school system calendar committee then works out from the middle, both forwards and backwards, to meet the mandated number of days while addressing the issues and needs of their community.

Furthermore, additional information was presented by several speakers and from newspaper articles indicating that perhaps the question should not be a post-Labor Day start but a year round school calendar. Proponents of year round school believe that this will benefit all children by reducing the amount of re-teaching that must occur at the beginning of each school year due to the learning loss that occurs over the summer. Furthermore, children that are not exposed to a wide variety of summer enrichment activities are at greater risk. It was suggested by supporters of this model that having year round school, with a greater number of shorter breaks throughout the school year, could perhaps better position the United States to compete with its global counterparts.

If a post-Labor Day school start date law was promulgated, local school system superintendents, the State Superintendent, union representatives, the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, and the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland all indicated that, while not desirable, they would need to follow the new law as written. Many concerns were identified with this option: impact on teachers' ability to adequately prepare students for mandated tests, ultimately effecting student test scores; the ability to meet the 180-day requirement by June 30th in the event there are a significant number of inclement weather days; the inability to adequately provide teacher in-service days; the aging infrastructure as it relates to the number of facilities without air conditioning and lost days due to extreme heat; the inability to coordinate students' dual enrollment in college courses; the loss of time-honored community traditions such as Fair Day and Autumn Glory; and most importantly, the inability to work with their communities to best meet the needs of their students.

Issues Considered (Appendix XIV & XV)

After each work session, the workgroups reported their discussions to the Task Force. The following issues were considered by the education workgroup (Appendix XIV and XV):

- Facilities with and without air conditioning
 - Garrett County's climate is much different than Baltimore City's, so having air conditioning may not be a factor in Garrett County.
- Determined that there was no compelling evidence that showed there was any impact on education starting post-Labor Day.
 - The group acknowledges that they understand the rationale for a pre-Labor Day start date made by the various speakers but felt that there was no quantifiable evidence that a post-Labor Day start is harmful to local schools systems.

- Summer school enrichment opportunities were discussed but were not fully developed.
- Mocked up a post-Labor Day start calendar and determined it was possible.
- Professional development times vary by school district and union, calendar autonomy may help this.
- The idea that local school systems allow their unions to negotiate so that teachers obtain professional development via experiences beyond the school system provided trainings.
- Amend State Law concerning mandated holidays (Easter Monday).

Sub-Recommendations (Appendix XIV & XV):

- 1) Recommend that school systems should move forward to make sure 75% of facilities have air conditioning. Those school systems with less than 75% of their buildings with air conditioning may apply for an exemption from the post-Labor Day start date until FY 2017.
- 2) Recommend that the State of Maryland repeal the law that Easter Monday be a state holiday and allow each jurisdiction to schedule the Monday after Easter.
- 3) Recommend that local jurisdictions “think outside the box” in providing and accounting for professional development training. Local school systems should allow teachers to obtain professional development or professional learning via experiences beyond the contractual school day and year. By encouraging teachers to attend outside trainings, the local school systems do not have to schedule as many professional development days. This ultimately could translate into more instructional days on the calendar.
 - The group acknowledged that teachers should obtain prior approval for an outside experiential learning opportunity. Teachers must also show evidence of professional development or a professional learning plan. Some examples include participation within webinars or seminars, attendance to, or presenting at a local, state or national conference, professional externships, study abroad, as well as non-credit bearing on-line learning. By allowing this form of professional development or learning, it will provide the local school systems flexibility in scheduling by considering a reduction in the number of scheduled professional development days during the school year, which would increase the number of instructional days.

Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on the Economy

Introduction

The economy workgroup was responsible for studying the impact of a post-Labor Day start date on the economy. This workgroup focused on the economic impact of not only tourism but other facets that contribute to the state's economy. Based on a thorough review of the information provided by Task Force staff and additional materials supplied by the workgroup; the workgroup made one sub-recommendation.

Statewide Data

Data Provided by Economy Workgroup

- Economy workgroup report (Appendix XVI)
- Economic Impact Map (Appendix XVII)

Laws and regulations

- N/A

Speakers

- Ms. Teresa Tudor, Senior Manager, Office of School and Family Partnerships, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Edward F. Sparks, Executive Director, Maryland Secondary Schools Athletic Association (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Ray Leone, President, Maryland Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) (Appendix IV)
- Mr. David Reel, President and CEO, Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Thomas Noonan, CEO, Visit Baltimore (Appendix IV)
- Mr. John Woolums, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Community Colleges (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Carl Roberts, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (Appendix IV)
- Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, State Superintendent, Maryland State Department of Education (Appendix VI)
- Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, St. Mary's County Public Schools and President of PSSAM (Appendix VI)
- Mr. Franklin Chaney, Chief of Recreation Services, Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks (Appendix VI)

- Mr. Ryan Burbey, President, Harford County Education Association (Appendix VIII)
- Mr. Randy Mickens, Organizational Specialist, Lobbyist Maryland State Education Association (Appendix VIII)

General Information

- Article, Labor Day in the United States (Appendix III)
- Chart, 2013-2014 Public Schools Opening and Closing Dates (Appendix III)
- Chart, Public School Start and End Dates: Ten Years of Historical Data (Appendix III)
- Chart, School System Closures, December 2009 – February 2010 (Appendix III)
- 2011-2012 School Start Dates Map (Appendix IX)
- States with School Start Date Laws – Updated July 31, 2012 (Appendix IX)
- Required School Days, Instructional Hours Required Yearly and School Start Dates (appendix IX)
- State Regulatory Requirements for Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Minnesota, Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa (Appendix IX)
- Letters Received from Local School Systems and Local Boards of Education (Appendix XI)

Studies/Reports

- “Economic Impact of a post Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools,” Bureau of Revenue Estimates, August 14, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- “An Economic Analysis of the Changing School Start Date in Texas,” Susan Combs, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, December 2000 (Appendix VII)
- “South Carolina Early School Start Dates and the South Carolina Travel and Tourism Industries: An Analysis of Economic & Tax Revenue Impacts,” Stephan C. Morse, Ph.D., Professor & Economist School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management, University of South Carolina, August 2002 (Appendix VII)
- “Impact of a Uniform School Year on Florida’s Economy,” The Florida Senate, Interim Project Report 2003-112 Committee on Commerce and Economic Opportunities, January 2003 (Appendix VII)
- “Post Labor Day School Start Dates in Tennessee: An Analysis of the Economic and Tax Revenue Impacts on Tennessee Travel and Tourism Industry,” Steve Morse, Ph.D., Director & Economist Tourism Institute Department of Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Management, University of Tennessee, January 2008 (Appendix VII)
- “Do families vacation more in the summer when school starts after Labor Day?” Elton Mykerezi, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota and Genti Kostandini, Assistant Professor, Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, University of Georgia, July 23, 2012 (Appendix VII)

- “Economic Impact of the Publicly Funded K-12 Education on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in FY 2013” Business Economic and Community Outreach Network at Salisbury University (Appendix XI)

News Articles

- Mathias Seeks Task Force to Study Later School Start, *The Dispatch*, February 22, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Start school after Labor Day, Md. Is urged, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 16, 2013 (Appendix III)
- One week and counting, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 19, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Starting School after Labor Day has serious benefits, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Shorter school summer break is better policy, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Saving summer at the expense of student learning, *The Washington Post*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Franchot gains O’Malley’s support on school start, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 21, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Franchot’s school proposal doesn’t hold water, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 22, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Post-Labor Day school start merits investigation, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 22, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Our say: Delaying school’s start a backward-looking idea, *Capital Gazette*, August 23, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Year-round school would benefit kids, economy, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 27, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Don’t reject out of hand a post-Labor Day start for schools, *The Baltimore Sun*, September 4, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Mathias optimistic about post-holiday school start committee, *The Dispatch*, October 4, 2013 (Appendix V)
- Task Force Debating Delaying School Year to After Labor Day, *Fox 45 News*, November 12, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Franchot continues push for post-Labor Day school start, *Southern Maryland News Papers Online*, December 13, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Franchot should stop meddling, *Southern Maryland News Papers Online*, December 18, 2013 (Appendix VII)
- Lowery says school districts need autonomy on start of school year, *Baltimore Sun*, January 7, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Texas schools’ later start means big savings on utilities, *Pearland News*, August 21, 2008 (Appendix IX)
- School Start Dates, *Texas Association of School Boards*, Governmental Relations 2012 (Appendix IX)

- School start date has no bearing on tourism, *The Gaffney Ledger*, February 18, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Area Boards Want State OK to Start School Before Labor Day B.P Smith, Lawmakers Back Early Start to Improve Academics, *Belle Plaine Herald*, January 28, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Minnesota's school start date spurs fights, *Star Tribune*, January 20, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- VA. Senate panel protects post-Labor Day school law, *The Roanoke Times*, February 14, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Delegates offer new approaches to Labor Day school debate, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, February 3, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Lawmakers Propose Changes in Mandatory School Start Law, *WUWM News Radio*, June 26, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- *Neighborhood News Service Milwaukee*, September 16, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Worcester OKs Post-Labor Day Start To School; County Will Be Only One in Md. *The Dispatch*, February 20, 2014 (Appendix XI)
- Poll to Gauge Opinion on Post-Labor Day School Start, *The Dispatch*, March 20, 2014 (Appendix XIII)

Data Analysis

One speaker presented studies concerning Texas, South Carolina, Minnesota, Tennessee, Florida, and Maryland, and provided these reports to the Task Force. These studies reported the projected economic benefits to the respective states with regard to a post-Labor Day start date. Four of these reports were more than six years old; therefore, Task Force staff provided members with more current information pertaining to each state studied in the aforementioned reports.

This material contained calendar information regarding the school year start dates across the United States (2011-2012), a summary of the states with school start date laws (updated July 31, 2012), and a summary of the required school days, instructional hours and school start dates by state (2011-2012). Additionally, articles regarding current updates on the issues surrounding school start dates for Texas, South Carolina, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin (dated 2012-2014 with the exception of one article) were provided to members as well.

Comptroller Peter Franchot presented Maryland's report prior to the initial meeting of the post-Labor Day Task Force. As a result, at the initial meeting of the Task Force, members were reminded that the Governor had selected them to study the effects of a post-Labor Day start date on Maryland public schools. While the Task Force should recognize the report and acknowledge the public discussion that has occurred prior to the Task Force meeting, it is important for the Task Force to build on the information already available, and to explore any and all additional information, before issuing findings and recommendations.

Maryland's report, written by the Bureau of Revenue Estimates on August 14, 2013, highlighted the benefits to Maryland's economy and families if schools were required to start after Labor Day. It reports that 8.5% of Maryland families with school aged children would take either a new day trip or overnight trip in Maryland, another 5.2% would take a new out-of-state trip, and the remaining families would devote a least one additional day to family activities.

It is reported that tourism and family recreational activities are the catalysts for the increased economic activity. The Bureau of Revenue Estimates projects a post-Labor Day start date will result in \$74.3 million in direct economic activity and approximately \$7.7 million in new state and local government revenues.

The report, *Economic Analysis of the Changing School Start Date in Texas*, (2000) indicated that in tourist destination areas, at least \$332 million dollars were lost due to an early school start date. Furthermore, 65% of Texans reported that parents would prefer a uniform start date and that the children of migrant workers would benefit most from that decision.

The report concerning South Carolina (2002) examined the effects and impacts of early school start dates on the travel and tourism economy of the state. This report concludes that South Carolina schools have moved start dates up by as many as three weeks and that this shift in start date has been associated with lower tourism activity in August, which has not been offset by an increase in June. Furthermore, schools have incurred higher utility costs associated with cooling school buildings due to the hot weather in August. Finally, in one scenario it is estimated that if 40% of families took one more vacations in the year, the impact would be \$180 million in tourism related spending, \$6 million in new state tax revenue, and \$2.3 million in new local tax revenue.

In 2003 the Florida Senate conducted an interim report (2003) to examine whether or not later school start dates would benefit the state's economy, specifically the tourism industry, without harming the public school system. It was determined that there was not any current available data that indicated starting schools later would benefit the state's economy. In fact, it was found that the current early start dates may have only changed the timing of tourism revenue and expenditures. Therefore, the Florida committee recommended against enacting a uniform school start date or calendar at that time.

A Tennessee study (2008) was conducted to 1) determine if a post-Labor Day start would influence Tennessee residents' summer travel plans, and 2) estimate potential economic impact on state tax, local tax, and payroll. The report concluded that approximately 463,000 Tennessee residents would take an additional vacation during the summer if school started after Labor Day and approximately 223,000 residents would extend their vacation through the holiday weekend. It is anticipated that extending the summer would generate \$189 million in tourist spending, \$73 million in statewide payroll, and create more than 2,600 jobs.

Current information pertaining to states that have laws governing school calendars indicated that fifteen states (30%) have laws pertaining to school start dates and only ten of those fifteen states (20%) actively enforce these laws. Also, just because a state has a law pertaining to school start dates, does not mean that all ten of these states mandate a post-Labor Day start date.

Furthermore, current articles addressing school start dates in the states identified in the aforementioned articles highlight how local school systems and the legislators and business community members continue to be divided on when the first day of school should be. In fact the Texas Association of School Boards reported in 2012 that the debate has been ongoing for over two decades and control over the calendar start date has swung back and forth between the school system and the legislature. In general, school system personnel and representatives advocate for local control to meet the needs of their communities, and the business community advocates for state control, citing increased economic growth and increased tourism.

The economy workgroup reports that it reviewed the many “school start date economic impact” reports representing a variety of states. The work group chose to highlight the key pieces of information from each of the identified state reports that provided the foundation for the workgroup’s discussions as they considered their recommendations. Key sources of information included:

Florida (January 2003)

- Best way to determine whether families would travel and increase tourism expenditures as a result of later school start dates is to conduct a survey to ask how tourism expenditures would change.
- Revenues will likely shift from one segment of the state's economy to the tourism industry – therefore, later school start dates are not likely to provide a net economic benefit to the state.
- Recommendation is that district school boards continue to have the authority to set school calendars at their discretion.

Maryland (August 2013)

- The entire report provides a compelling argument for starting school post Labor-Day.
- Seven days equals \$70 million of economic impact.
- Over \$13.6 million in new wages.
- Over \$5.2 million in new state government revenue.
- Over \$2.4 million in local revenue.

South Carolina (dated August 2002)

- Conservative scenario estimates economic and tax revenue impacts where as little as 4 out of 10 South Carolina families take one additional vacation, would generate \$6.03 million in state tax revenue and \$2.34 million in local tax revenues.
- Chart on page 14 of South Carolina packet shows, in great detail, the economic impact of potential vacation spending.
- Weather and heat related factors of August vs. September school openings.

Minnesota (July 2012)

- Over 50% of families report at least one trip of two or more nights away from home with a post-Labor Day start having a direct impact on the Minnesota economy.

Tennessee (dated January 2008)

- Tennessee conducted a study to examine economic impact of a post-Labor-Day start date.
- Statewide economic, state tax, local tax, payroll, and employment impacts estimated to generate \$9.72 million in new state tax, \$5.50 million in new total local county tax, \$79.2 million in new worker incomes, and generate 2,619 new jobs statewide.
- 462,712 Tennessee residents would take one additional Tennessee summer vacation.

Texas (dated December 2000)

- Reduced tourist activity.
- Higher school cooling costs.
- Lost income to farm/migrant worker families.
- Overall employment of high school and college students by seasonal establishments is reduced (employment loss equates to reduction in personal income for these individuals).
- Camp season shortened – college students employed 2 to 3 weeks shorter in summer.

Finally, the economic workgroup generated a Maryland map, broken down by county that highlights the variety of economic activities that will benefit from a post-Labor Day start. This map was designed to illustrate how far-reaching the benefits of a post-Labor Day start date would be on the economy, not just in the “typical” tourist areas, but statewide. See the attached map for detailed information. (Appendix XVII)

Issues Considered (Appendix XIV & XVI)

After each small group work session, work groups were required to report their discussions to the Task Force. These briefings and the workgroup’s independent report indicate that the following issues were discussed and considered by the economy workgroup:

Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on Summer Tourism

Introduction

The tourism workgroup was responsible for studying the impact of a post-Labor Day start date on summer tourism. Based on a thorough review of the information provided by Task Force staff and additional materials supplied by the workgroup; the workgroup made three sub-recommendations.

Statewide Data

Data Provided by Summer Tourism Workgroup

- Summer Tourism workgroup report (Appendix XVIII)
- Percentage of Sales and Use Tax by Season (Appendix XIX)
 - Garret County
 - Worcester County
- Admission and Amusement (Appendix XX)
 - Garrett County
 - Worcester County

Laws and Regulations:

- N/A

Speakers

- Ms. Teresa Tudor, Senior Manager, Office of School and Family Partnerships, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Edward F. Sparks, Executive Director, Maryland Secondary Schools Athletic Association (Appendix IV)
- Mr. Ray Leone, President, Maryland Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) (Appendix IV)
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- Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, State Superintendent, Maryland State Department of Education (Appendix VI)

- Dr. Michael J. Martirano, Superintendent, St. Mary's County Public Schools and President of PSSAM (Appendix VI)
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- “An Economic Analysis of the Changing School Start Date in Texas,” Susan Combs, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, December 2000 (Appendix VII)
- “South Carolina Early School Start Dates and the South Carolina Travel and Tourism Industries: An Analysis of Economic & Tax Revenue Impacts,” Stephan C. Morse, Ph.D., Professor & Economist School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management, University of South Carolina, August 2002 (Appendix VII)
- “Impact of a Uniform School Year on Florida’s Economy,” The Florida Senate, Interim Project Report 2003-112 Committee on Commerce and Economic Opportunities, January 2003 (Appendix VII)
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- “Do families vacation more in the summer when school starts after Labor Day?” Elton Mykerezi, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota and Genti Kostandini, Assistant Professor, Department

of Agriculture and Applied Economics, University of Georgia, July 23, 2012 (Appendix VII)

- “Economic Impact of the Publicly Funded K-12 Education on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in FY 2013,” Business Economic and Community Outreach Network at Salisbury University (Appendix VII)
- “Fiscal Year 2013 Tourism Development Annual Report,” Maryland Tourism Development Board and the Department of Business and Economic Development, 2013 (Appendix XI)

News Articles

- Mathias Seeks Task Force to Study Later School Start, *The Dispatch*, February 22, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Start school after Labor Day, Md. Is urged, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 16, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Let summer last, *The Star Democrat*, August 26, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Year-round school would benefit kids, economy, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 27, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Don’t reject out of hand a post-Labor Day start for schools, *The Baltimore Sun*, September 4, 2013 (Appendix III)
- Mathias optimistic about post-holiday school start committee, *The Dispatch*, October 4, 2013 (Appendix V)
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- Delegates offer new approaches to Labor Day school debate, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, February 3, 2014 (Appendix IX)
- Lawmakers Propose Changes in Mandatory School Start Law, *WUWM News Radio*, June 26, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- *Neighborhood News Service Milwaukee*, September 16, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- Maryland hotels improve revenue, occupancy rates in 2012, *The Baltimore Business Journal*, March 28, 2013 (Appendix IX)
- School Leader Explains to Tourism Officials Why He Opposes Change To Post-Labor Day Start, *The Dispatch*, February 6, 2014 (Appendix XI)
- Worcester OKs Post-Labor Day Start To School; County Will Be Only One in Md. *The Dispatch*, February 20, 2014 (Appendix XI)
- Poll to Gauge Opinion on Post-Labor Day School Start, *The Dispatch* March 20, 2014 (Appendix XIII)

Data Analysis

On August 14, 2013, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot and the Bureau of Revenue Estimates released its study titled, “Economic Impact of a Post-Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools.” This study highlights the benefits to Maryland’s economy and families if schools were required to start after Labor Day. It reports that 8.5% of the 514,680 Maryland families with school aged children would take either a new day trip or overnight trip in Maryland, another 5.2% would take a new out-of-state trip, and the remaining families would devote a least one additional day to family recreational activities if Maryland public schools started after Labor Day. Most importantly, it reports that Maryland would actualize \$74.3 million in direct economic activity as a result of the increased tourism.

On March 28, 2013, the Baltimore Business Journal reported that Maryland hotels improved revenue and occupancy rates in 2012. This article reports that the Maryland Office of Tourism Development indicated that Maryland hotels and inns saw more business in 2012. Lodging revenue across the state increased 3.4% in 2012 and the demand for rooms increased 1.3%. Washington County made the largest gains with a 9.3% increase in room demand, 12.1% increase in room revenue, and 11.1% increase in hotel occupancy. Allegany, Calvert, Charles, and Montgomery Counties were the only ones that saw drops in demands for rooms.

“Fiscal Year 2013 Tourism Development Annual Report,” from the Maryland Tourism Development Board and the Department of Business and Economic Development, provides relevant information regarding the impact of the travel and tourism industry on Maryland’s economy. The report provides a three-year prospective for three distinct categories, (1) tourism: a revenue generator, (2) Office of Tourism Development performance measurements, and (3) tourism sales tax revenues. Visitor spending totaled \$14,908.4 million and experienced a 4.6% increase. The report states that, “Since 2007, sales tax revenues attributed to tourism have grown 31.4%, far outperforming the 19.7 percent growth of overall sales tax collections.

The tourism revenues now account for more than 9 percent of all sales tax collections.”
(Appendix XIX and XX)

The report concerning South Carolina (2002) examined the effects and impacts of early school start dates on the travel and tourism economy of the state. This report concludes that South Carolina schools have moved start dates up by as many as three weeks and that this shift in start date has been associated with lower tourism activity in August, which has not been offset by an increase in June. Furthermore, schools have incurred higher utility costs associated with cooling school buildings due to the hot weather in August. Finally, in one scenario it is estimated that if 40% of families took one more vacations in the year, the impact would be \$180 million in tourism related spending, \$6 million in new state tax revenue, and \$2.3 million in new local tax revenue.

Interestingly, in 2013 it was reported that the study conducted by the Olde English Consortium reported that the uniform start date for South Carolina public schools did not increase tourism as was projected, which was the impetus for implementing the law six years prior to the study. It reported that the occupancy data showed “little correlation exists between school start dates and hotel occupancy in the summer months, and is a net negative.” It further indicated that the law was changed with little concern for its impact to the students.

Additionally, the University of Minnesota studied whether or not families vacation more in the summer when schools start after Labor Day. This report from 2012 indicates that states have historically struggled to accommodate the competing interests of the varied stakeholders in determining whether to mandate a post-Labor Day start to schools. This study used data from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) to examine the differences in family travel patterns from 2005-2010 in five states: Minnesota, Virginia, Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin that have mandated start dates. Some of these start dates are pre-Labor Day and some are post. Findings indicated families were 50% more likely to take a two night or more trip in August or September if there was a post Labor Day start date.

Due to the dates of many of the reports cited by a presenter a Task Force member asked staff to provide updated information pertaining each state studied. This information contained calendar information regarding the school year start dates across the United States (2011-2012), a summary of the states with school start date laws (updated July 31, 2012), and a summary of the required school days, instructional hours and school start dates by state (2011-2012). Additionally, articles regarding current updates on the issues surrounding school start dates for Texas, South Carolina, Minnesota, Virginia, and Wisconsin (dated 2012-2014 with the exception of one article) were provided to members as well.

Current information presented indicated that while fifteen states, or 30%, have laws pertaining to school start dates only ten of those fifteen states, or 20%, actively enforce these laws. Also, just because a state has a law pertaining to school start dates, it does not mean that all ten of these states mandate a post Labor Day start date. The articles provided to the Task Force all

highlight the ongoing debates between school systems, the legislature, and business community. In each instance, the school systems express a need for local control to meet the needs of their communities and the business community and legislature advocates for economic growth and increased tourism. In some instances, such as Texas, the legislature has reversed the laws pertaining to school start dates a number of times.

Issues Considered (Appendix XIV & XVIII)

After each small group work session, workgroups were required to report their discussions to the Task Force. These briefings and the workgroup's independent report indicate that the following issues were considered by the summer tourism workgroup:

The summer tourism independent report indicated that it relied on data provided by Maryland's report titled, "Economic Impact of a Post Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools," written by the Bureau of Revenue Estimates in August 14, 2013; information presented by Mr. David Reel, President and CEO, Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association; and information presented by Mr. Thomas Noonan, CEO, Visit Baltimore.

Specifically, the Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association and other similar organizations strongly support the post-Labor Day school start as long as it is not at the expense of the state's educational program. Mr. Reel cited findings from the State of Virginia as Virginia does require a post-Labor Day start for its districts. Findings indicates that counties starting post-Labor Day had higher English/language arts and mathematics test scores than counties starting pre-Labor Day. He stated that there are approximately 35.4 million out-of-state tourists that visit Maryland, and it is important to encourage leisure travel for the state. Without this type of tourism in the state, Mr. Reel foresees that Maryland could face a \$400 million structural deficit which could lead to lesser spending for education. While Mr. Reel indicated he would share the data from Virginia that he cited with the Task Force Chair, this data was not provided.

Secondly, the summer tourism workgroup reported that Mr. Thomas Noonan stressed that a 3 month tourist season is stronger than a 2 1/2 month tourist season; therefore, a post-Labor Day start is advantageous. He indicated that several states: Wisconsin, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Minnesota and Virginia; which have a pre-Labor Day start, had a drop in tourism. Many Baltimore City students who work summer jobs must leave their positions in order to return to school pre-Labor Day. This is difficult for city businesses. Also, there is a drop in airline ticket sales, hotel reservations, AMTRAK reservations, etc. post August 15 for Baltimore City businesses. Mr. Noonan further indicated that a post-Labor Day start is good for revenue, tourism and jobs. There are surveys showing parents want a post-Labor Day start. He provided those surveys to the Task Force chairman to share with members. Those surveys included:

- Reports from South Carolina, Tennessee, and the University of Michigan
 - An Economic Analysis of the Changing School Start Date in Texas, December 2000;

- South Carolina Early School Start Dates and the South Carolina Travel and Tourism Industries: An Analysis of Economic & Tax Revenue Impacts, August 2002;
- Post Labor Day School Start Dates in Tennessee: An Analysis of the Economic and Tax Revenue Impacts on Tennessee Travel and Tourism Industry, January 2008; and
- Do families vacation more in the summer when school starts after Labor Day? July 23, 2012.

Additional considerations of the summer tourism workgroup included (Appendix XVIII):

- The Comptroller’s report and additional information requested of the comptroller’s office;
 - Comptroller’s office has information broken down by year as well as monthly concerning revenue generated from taxes
- Contacting tourist attractions like Six Flags, Orioles, and the Aquarium;
 - It appears tourism numbers do go down in August.
- Group is looking at King’s Dominion and the King’s Dominion rule in regard to opting out for weather concerns;
- Gaming does affect education but this has not been fully realized as all casinos are not fully operational. Until there is routine data for all casinos it is difficult to determine what is seasonal;
 - There have been declines at Arundel Mills, Ocean Downs, and Perryville (the group indicated that this information would be forthcoming).
- Discussion of what the “top” ten tourist destinations or attractions are in Maryland; and
- Information from Smith Travel concerning Ocean City hotel occupancy rates and room tax.

OCCUPANCY RATE	June	August	September
2011	68%	71%	63%
2012	70%	76%	63%
2013	68%	80%	64%

ROOM TAX	June	August	September
2011	2.2 million	2.5 million	1.0 million
2012	2.5 million	2.9 million	1.16 million
2013	2.6 million	3.0 million	1.18 million

Sub-Recommendations from the Summer Tourism Workgroup (Appendix XIV & XVIII)

- 1) Recommend a post-Labor Day start for Maryland public schools
- 2) Recommend the calendar committees from each local school system review the structure of their calendar and holidays for a balance points
- 3) Recommend the Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association review its policies regarding athletic start dates

Task Force Recommendation

Over the course of the past year, the Task Force to Study a post-Labor Day start date for Maryland Public Schools met a total of eight times to review the impact of moving the start date of the public school year in the State to after Labor Day on the following areas:

- 1) The education system, including the academic calendar, planning, administration, and facilities use;
- 2) The economy; and
- 3) Summer tourism.

Each independent workgroup made sub-recommendation(s) to the group at large for their consideration and discussion. These sub-recommendation(s) included:

Education:

- 1) Local school systems should move forward to make sure 75% of school facilities have air conditioning. Those school systems with less than 75% of their buildings with air conditioning may apply for an exemption from the post-Labor Day start date until FY 2017.
- 2) The State of Maryland should repeal the law that Easter Monday be a State holiday and allow each jurisdiction to schedule the Monday after Easter, as appropriate.
- 3) Local school systems should “think outside the box” in providing and accounting for professional development training. Local school systems should allow teachers to obtain professional development or professional learning via experiences beyond the contractual school day and year.

Economy:

- 1) A start date of no earlier than September 1st each year.

Summer Tourism:

- 1) A post-Labor Day start for Maryland Public Schools.
- 2) Calendar committees from each local school system review the structure of their system’s calendar and holidays for a balance point.
- 3) Maryland Secondary School Athletic Association review its policies regarding athletic start dates.

Task Force Recommendation:

While the Task Force considered the sub-recommendations of the workgroups; the Task Force accepted and passed only one recommendation. On May 19, 2014, a motion was made to recommend to the Governor, a post-Labor Day start date for Maryland Public Schools. The motion was carried by a vote of 12 votes for the recommendation and 3 votes against the recommendation.

Appendix Summary

- Appendix I: Chapter 336 (SB 936) Task Force to Study a Post-Labor Day Start Date for Maryland Public Schools
- Appendix II: September 17, 2013 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix III: September 17, 2013 Materials of Interest
- Appendix IV: November 12, 2013 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix V: November 12, 2013 Materials of Interest
- Appendix VI: January 7, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix VII: January 7, 2014 Materials of Interest
- Appendix VIII: February 5, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix IX: February 5, 2014 Materials of Interest
- Appendix X: March 24, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix XI: March 24, 2014 Materials of Interest
- Appendix XII: April 23, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix XIII: April 23, 2014 Materials of Interest
- Appendix XIV: May 19, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- Appendix XV: Independent Report for Workgroup 1: Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on the Education System
- Appendix XVI: Independent Report for Workgroup 2: Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on Economy
- Appendix XVII: Independent Materials for Workgroup 2: Economic Impact Map
- Appendix XVIII: Independent Report for Workgroup 3: Impact of Moving the Start Date of the Public School Year in the State to After Labor Day on Tourism
- Appendix XIX: Independent Materials Workgroup III: Percentage of Sales and Use Tax by Season
- Appendix XX: Independent Materials Workgroup III: Admission and Amusement
- Appendix XXI: News Articles following the May 19, 2014 Meeting