The State of Maryland

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER
01.01.2016.09

Starting the Public School Year After Labor Day

WHEREAS, The Labor Day holiday weekend is an exclusively American institution that has served, both symbolically and practically, as our nation's traditional end of summer;

WHEREAS, Generations of American workers and families have celebrated this rite of seasonal passage, and the days that precede it, with vacations, day trips, or other preferred opportunities to relax and enjoy time with family and friends;

WHEREAS, The policy of constructing the public school (Kindergarten through 12th grade) calendars so that classes begin prior to the Labor Day holiday has imperiled this venerable tradition;

WHEREAS, This policy has placed a significant competitive burden on Maryland's economy and many of its leading sectors, from agriculture to tourism and hospitality;

WHEREAS, This policy imposes an unacceptable public health and safety risk upon those students, teachers, and education employees who are required to report, in the second hottest month of the calendar year, to schools that lack air conditioning;

WHEREAS, A Task Force was convened by the Maryland General Assembly to conduct a thorough examination of the academic, administrative and economic implications associated with a post-Labor Day start to the academic year;

WHEREAS, This Task Force, which was led by the Maryland State Department of Education and included teachers, administrators, and business and civic leaders, (1) recognized the substantial economic benefits of a post-Labor Day start, (2) found neither adverse academic consequences nor intractable administrative barriers to the adoption of such a policy, and (3) voted overwhelmingly to endorse this reform to Maryland's public school calendars by moving the school start date to post-Labor Day;

WHEREAS, A study that was conducted by the Maryland Bureau of Revenue Estimates determined that adoption of a post-Labor Day starting date would result in an additional $74.3 million in direct economic activity, including $3.7 million in new wages and $7.7 million in State and local tax revenue that could be reinvested in classrooms throughout the State of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Starting school after Labor Day will provide public health benefits by reducing the local ozone generation numbers due to fewer buses operating on the roadways during the heart of the ozone season.

NOW THEREFORE, I, LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR., GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER SHALL TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY BUT SHALL FIRST APPLY TO THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR:

A. That all Kindergarten through 12th grade public schools in the State of Maryland (Public Schools), through the local Boards of Education, shall open for all pupil attendance no earlier than the Tuesday immediately following the nationally-observed Labor Day holiday.

B. That classes shall conclude and the school year for every Public School in Maryland shall adjourn no later than June 15, with the exception being summer school classes offered by school districts throughout the State.

C. That each local Board of Education shall retain full responsibility for establishing its annual academic calendar and, therefore, shall have the necessary latitude to determine how best to comply with the provisions of this Executive Order along with State and local laws.

D. That the requirements of this Executive Order do not apply to the operation of year-round schools as allowed under Section 7-103(e) of the Education Article of the Maryland Code.

E. That the requirements of this Executive Order do not apply to the timing of sports seasons as set forth in COMAR 13A.06.03.03.

F. A local Board of Education may apply to the State Board of Education annually for a waiver of the requirements of this Executive Order. A waiver may be granted at the sole discretion of the State Board of Education, as set forth in rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education, including:

(1) Procedures for filing an application for a waiver;

(2) Standards to receive a waiver based on compelling justification, which waiver is good for one school year only; and

(3) Procedures and standards for special waivers for school districts and individual schools proposing non-traditional schedules.

G. That this Executive Order applies to future school years, including and after 2017-2018.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 31st Day of August, 2016.

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor

ATTEST:

John C. Wobensmith
Secretary of State