

Standards for Determining a Bona Fide Year-Round School

Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, public schools are prohibited from holding classes before Labor Day [MCL 380.1284b]. The requirement to start school after Labor Day does not apply to districts that are already operating a year-round school or program or an international baccalaureate academy that provides 1,160 hours of pupil instruction. If a district begins operating a year-round school or program after September 29, 2005, the district may apply to the superintendent of public instruction for a waiver from the requirement to start after Labor Day. The superintendent of public instruction will grant the waiver if it is determined that the school or program is a bona fide year-round school or program established for educational purposes. The standards for determining a bona fide year-round school or program for the purposes of the waiver are as determined by the superintendent of public instruction.

The superintendent has determined that a school or program would be considered a bona fide year-round school if its calendar meets any of the following formats:

Calendar Coterminous with College / University

A school that is on the same calendar as an institution of higher education and the school shares facilities, faculty or courses with the higher education institution (e.g., middle colleges on the same calendar as a community college) may have the post Labor Day start requirement waived.

Length of Summer Break

For the 2006-2007 school year, a school that operates a school calendar that includes a summer break during summer of 2006 that is no greater than eight weeks in length may be considered a bona fide year-round school. Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, a school may be considered a bona fide year-round school if it operates a school calendar that includes a summer break during summer of 2007 that is no greater than six weeks in length.

45-15 Single-Track Plan

The year is divided into four nine-week sessions, separated by four three-week vacations. School is in session for nine weeks (45 days) following by a three-week vacation (15 days). This sequence of sessions and vacations repeats four times each year, thus providing the usual 36 weeks or 180 days of school. Four additional weeks each year are allocated to winter holidays, spring vacation, and national, state, or local holidays.

45-15 Multi-Track Plan

Under this type of calendar, students are divided into four groups. While groups A, B, C, are in school, D is on vacation. When D returns, A goes on vacation. The rotation continues every three weeks, thus providing for 33 percent additional space in the school. Each track has its own 45-15 schedule of nine weeks in school and three weeks on vacation.

60-20 Plan

Students attend school for 60 days (12 weeks) and vacation for 20 days (four weeks). Students rotate through the year until they have had three 60 day terms and three 20 day vacations. The 60-20 Plan can be varied to take into account winter holidays, spring vacation, and national, state, or local holidays. It can be conducted in either a single-track or multiple-track format.

60-15 Plan

This plan borrows from both the 45-15 and 60-20 formats in that the instructional period is 60 days and the vacation period is 15 days. By rearranging the instructional days, a common summer vacation of three

to four weeks can be given to all students and faculty. It is usually implemented with five tracks available to students. Teachers keep their own classrooms and teach a 225 day contract. One-fifth of the students are always on vacation.

90-30 Plan

The two 90-day semesters are separated by a 30 day vacation period twice a year, schools are closed during the traditional winter holiday period and spring vacation. This calendar can be conducted as either a single-track or a multi-track plan.

Waiver Request

A school that operates a school calendar using any of the above formats may apply to the superintendent of public instruction for a waiver from the requirement to start school after Labor Day. If the school has already been operating with a year-round format and would, therefore, be exempt from the requirement, the school must request approval from the Department to establish that the school is a bona fide year-round school. The waiver request or request for recognition of an existing year-round school must include specific information regarding the school calendar. Please submit the waiver request in writing to the following address:

Elaine M. Madigan, Executive Director
Bureau of School Finance and School Law
Michigan Department of Education
Post Office Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Madigane@michigan.gov
Office: 517-335-4074
Fax: 517-373-7113