



## SPS School Calendar Survey Results

December 2017

## Presentation Outline

- 1 Survey Response
- 2 Coordination of SPS & LSRHS School Calendars
- 3 School End Date Preferences
- 4 Vacation Preferences
- 5 Other Comments

“Thanks. I've worked in schools most of my adult life, and I know there are many many many thousands of factors to consider when putting together the academic calendar.... so I know whatever the final outcome, you're acting in our town/students/families' best interest. So, thank you!!!” -- Sudbury Parent

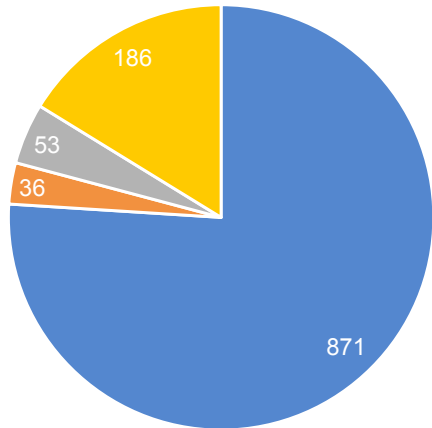
# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Respondent Overview

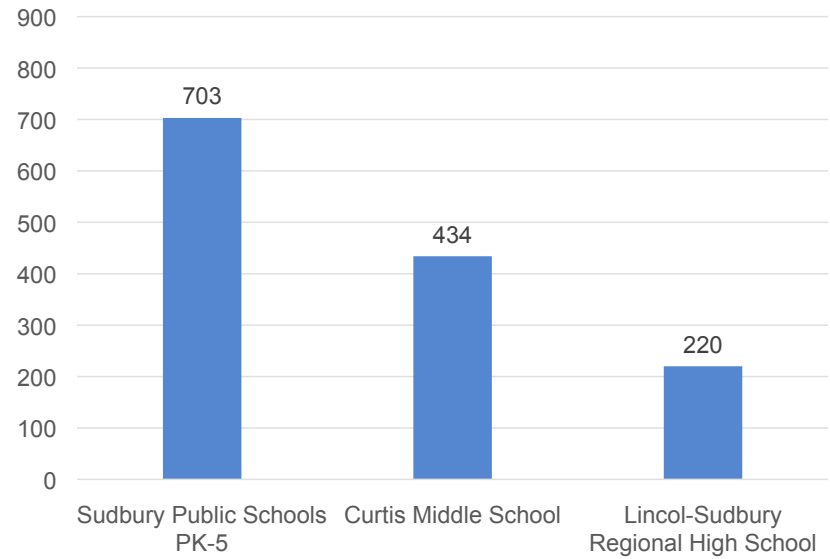
Over 1,000 Surveys were completed and analyzed

Overall Survey Respondents

■ Parent ■ Parent/Staff ■ SPS staff ■ Teacher



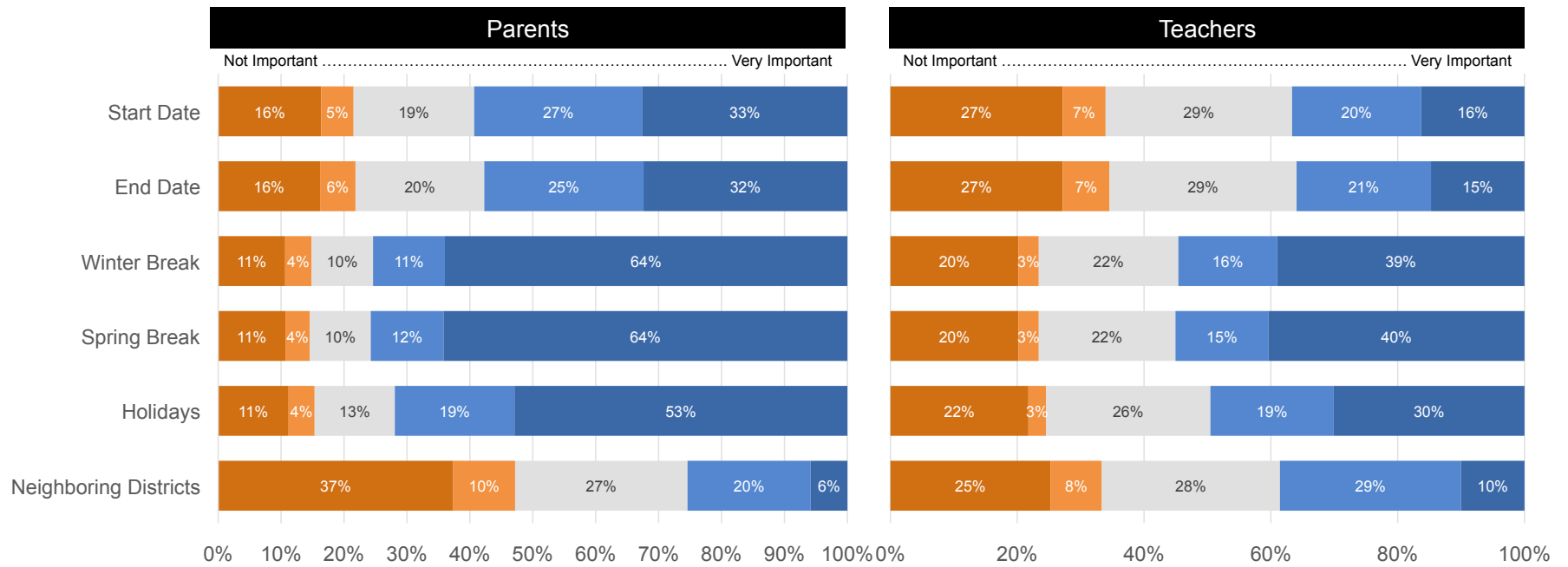
Respondents with Children in Sudbury Schools



# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Importance of Coordinating Sudbury School Calendars

**It is really important for both Parents and Teachers to coordinate the SPS and LSRHS schedules**



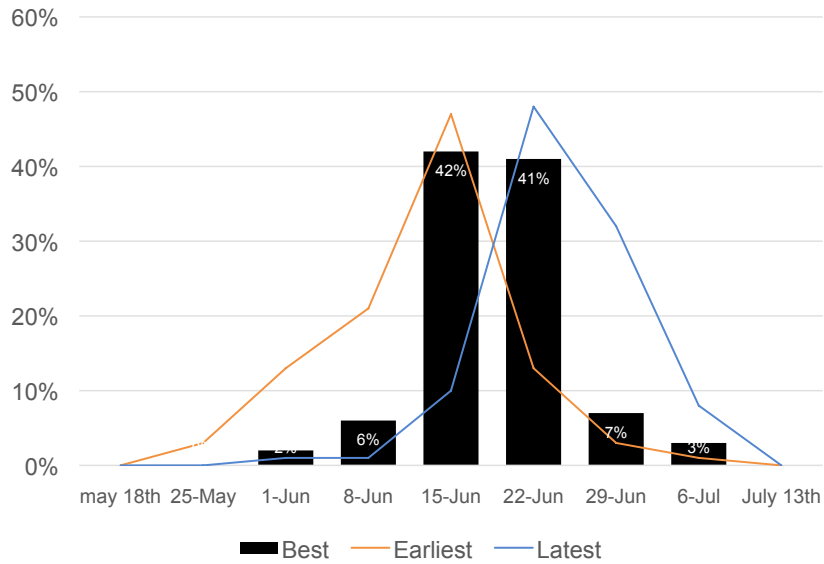
Survey Question: How important is it that the LS High School and SPS PK-8 schedules align for the following:

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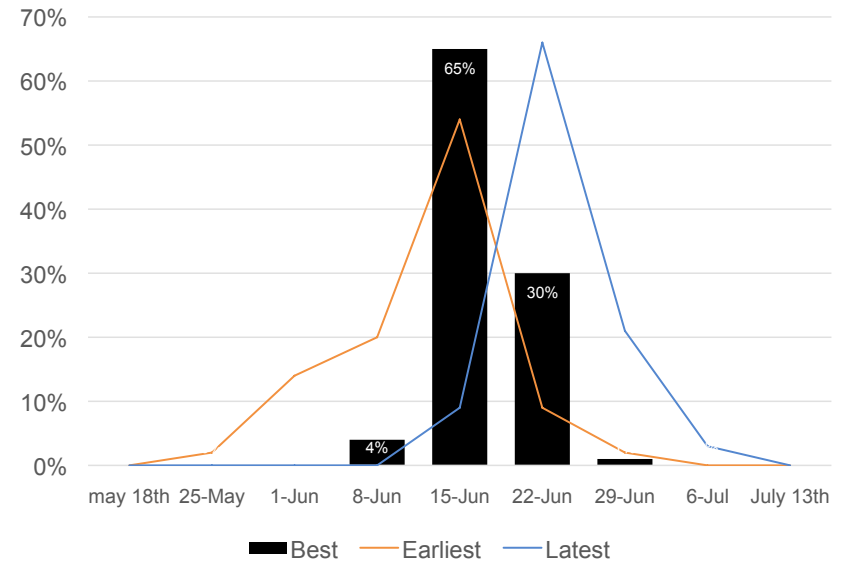
## School Year End Date

Parents and Teachers expressed similar school end date expectations

Parents



Teachers/Staff



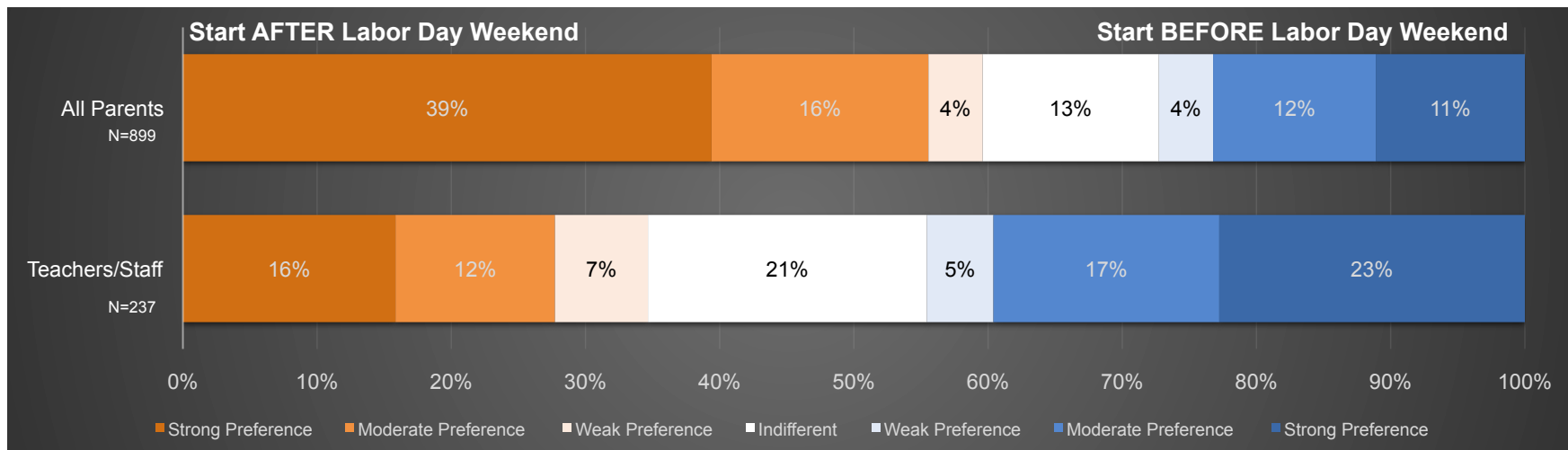
# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Labor Day

**Majority of Parents desire a later start to the school year, Teachers are more balanced.**

**Question:**

In years past, Labor Day has been considered the unofficial end of summer, but for a variety of reasons (mainly to end the school year early), schools often begin classes prior to Labor Day. If we can end school within the acceptable boundaries from the previous section, please rate your preference to start before (most often starting in late August) or after Labor Day (most likely starting the Wednesday after):



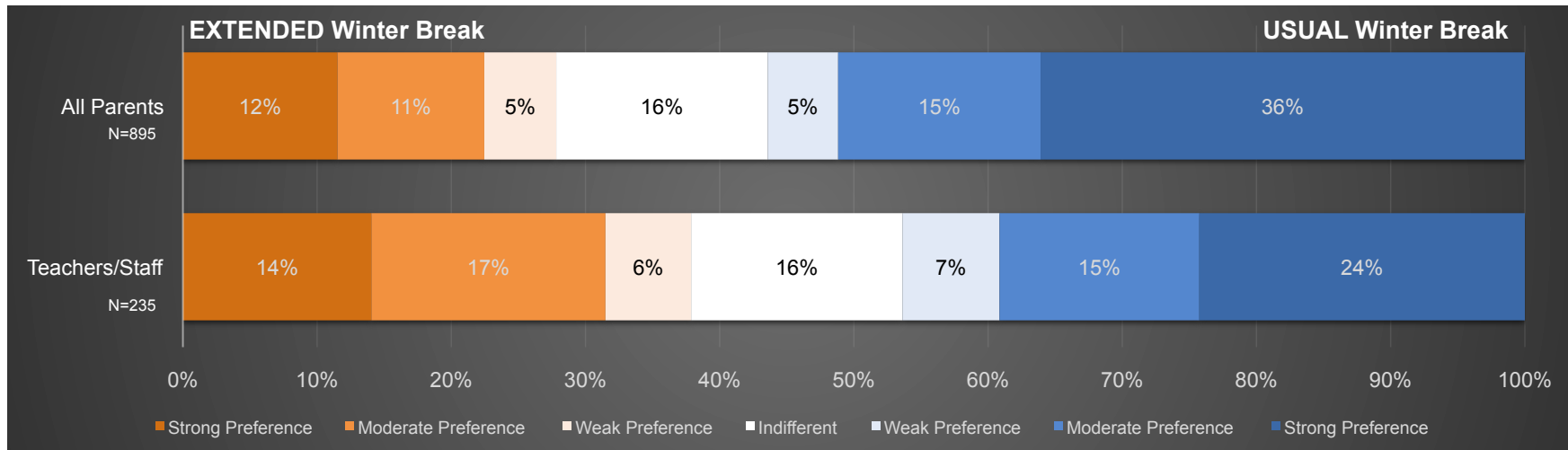
# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Winter Break

Overall, both Parents and Teachers prefer to keep the current Winter Break schedule

### Question:

The district typically schedules a winter break that begins Dec 24th and students return on Jan 2nd. While it is not common in many public schools, some school districts provide a longer winter break that either begins prior to Dec 24th, ends after Jan 2nd, or both. Please indicate whether you prefer the current Winter Break schedule or would prefer a longer Winter Break.



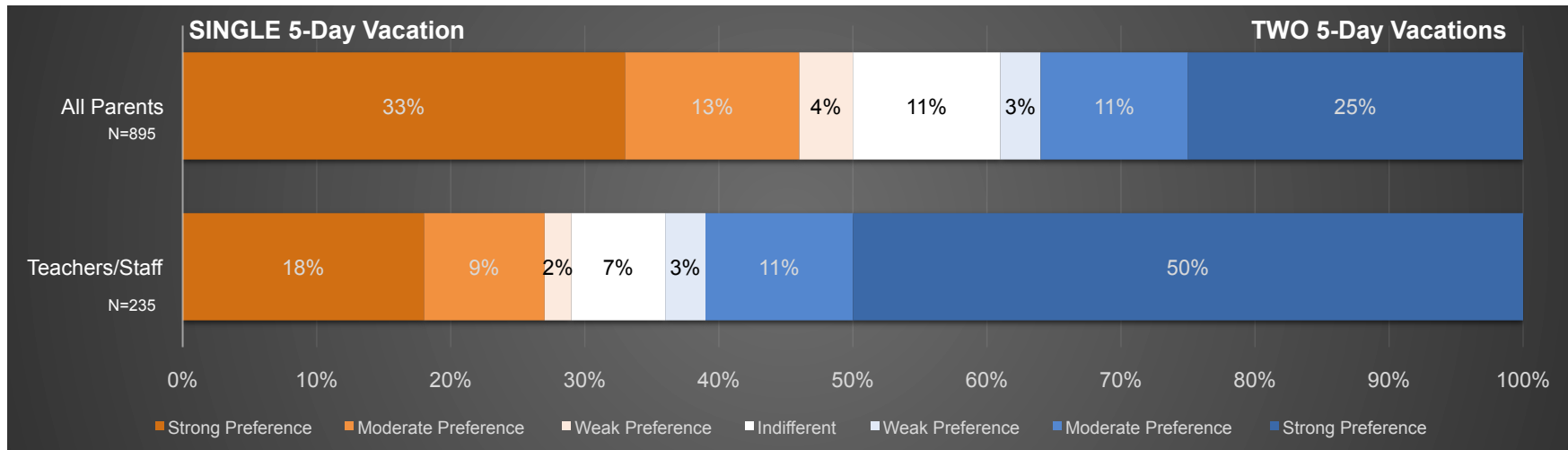
# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## “Spring” Vacation Schedule

**“Spring” Break opinions are more balanced for Parents, but Teachers prefer two breaks**

**Question:**

Currently the district schedules two full 5 day vacations (February and April) during the “Spring” session. Each vacation is based around a Massachusetts required holiday (President’s Day and Patriot’s Day). Please express your opinion if you would prefer to have a single 5-day vacation in March (President’s Day and Patriot’s Day would still be 3 day weekends) or prefer the existing schedule with two 5-day vacations (inclusive of President’s Day and Patriot’s Day). Each holiday will still result in three day weekends in February and April.





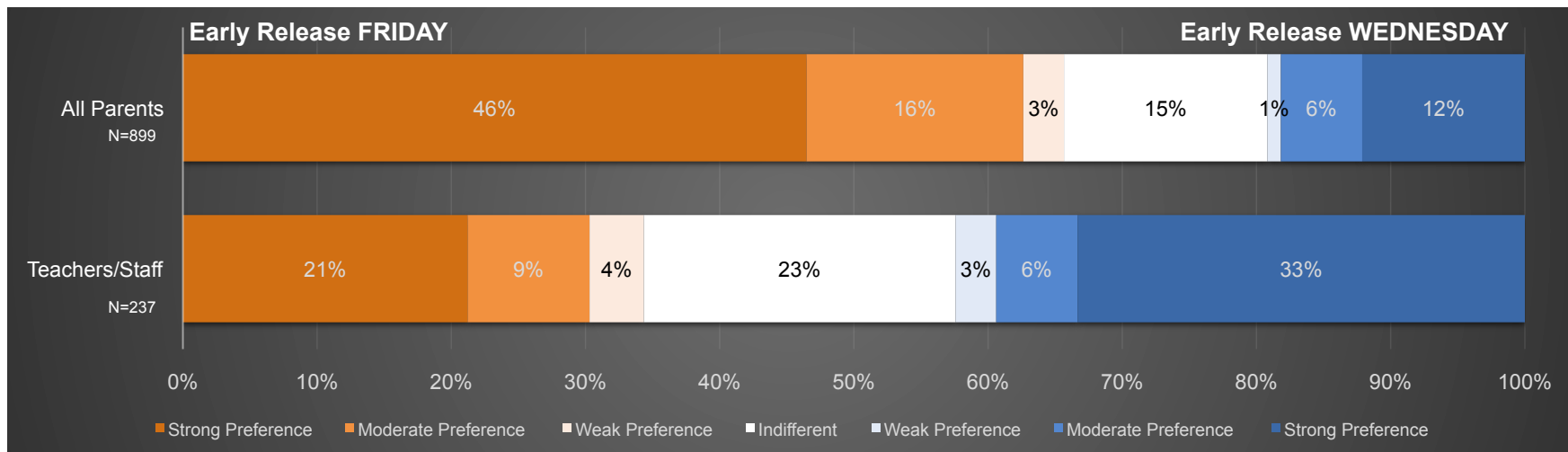
# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Early Release “ILAP” Day Schedule

**Parents expressed strongest preference for ILAP Fridays, but Teachers were more balanced**

**Question:**

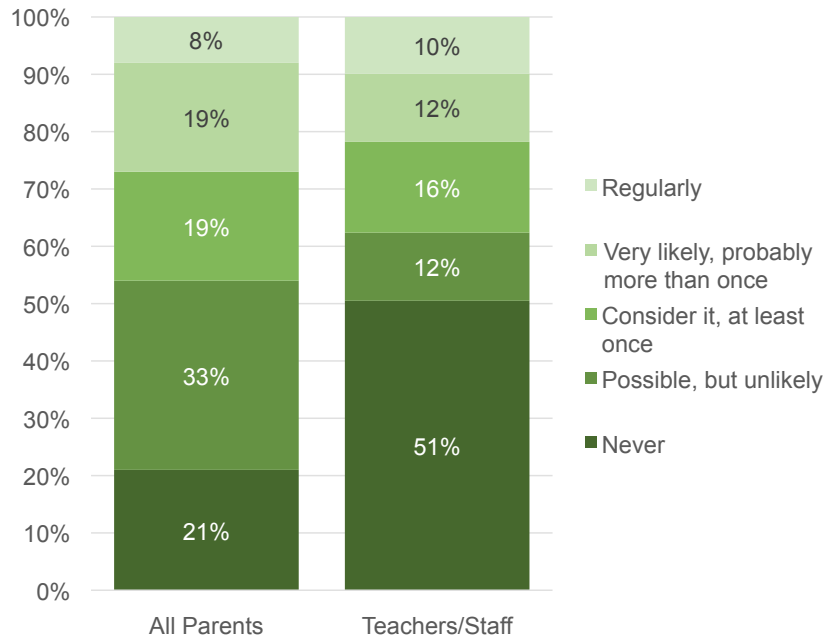
ILAP (“Improved Learning for All Plan”) Early Release Wednesdays are scattered throughout the school year. These afternoons are designated for teacher professional development, parent-teacher conferences and class placement meetings. Historically they have occurred on Wednesday afternoons, but some community members have raised the option of moving them to Friday afternoons.



## SPS School Calendar Survey Results

### Early Release “ILAP” Day Schedule – Risk of Student Absences

**How likely are you to take advantage of ½ day Fridays to create long weekend opportunities for your family to travel out of town (i.e. excuse your child from Friday’s school to leave town early)?**



“As a working parent I see the benefits of a Friday early release day. It’s easier for me to take a Friday afternoon than a Wednesday”

“For working parents, starting after Labor Day and moving ILAP days to Fridays would help so much in terms of care coverage and schedules. Wednesdays are very difficult right now, especially with a cap on SED admission.”

“I can see the benefit of moving ILAP to Friday for families that want to travel, but for working parents who use SED on ILAP Wednesday I’d be very hesitant to move it.”

“Has any thought been given to doing away with half day ILAP days and combining 2 ILAP days and have teacher professional development scheduled for a full day (possibly wrapped around an already existing long weekend like a 4 day weekend for Columbus Day or Martin Luther King Day)?”

“For very young students, I think having the ILAP days on Wednesdays is a really nice way to occasionally break up the week so they get a little extra rest and feel refreshed the rest of the week”

“Regarding ILAP Wednesdays, the inconsistency in schedule can be difficult for my child. I would STRONGLY prefer every week or (less preferably) a more consistent every other week schedule for the ILAP half day. I don’t care if it is on Wednesdays or Fridays, just as long as it is a more consistent schedule. Many neighboring districts have a weekly early release day.”

# SPS School Calendar Survey Results

## Other Survey Comments

### Spring Break

- Two "spring" breaks is excessive. Nobody else (I don't think) in the rest of the country does it. It makes no sense. You just had Christmas break. Spring break is on the horizon. No need to squeeze a 3rd week off.
- Having 2 breaks in February and April can be a financial drain, especially on families with less financial means than the families who can afford to take 2 weeks off and perhaps travel during those periods.
- I like having 2 week-long "spring" breaks for health reasons (i.e. to stop the cycle of colds in February) and it gives time to do significant trips, as opposed to quick weekend trips.

### Labor Day

- The date I feel strongest about is starting school after Labor Day. With heavy sports/camp schedules in early summer, the last week of August is a prime week to take a family vacation -- really the only week my family can do it. Having school scheduled for 2 days the last week of August, followed by a 4-day weekend, feels like a waste of a week that could be used a lot more efficiently.

### Religious Holidays

- Limit the number of religious holidays. School doesn't have to be cancelled on Jewish or Christian holidays. Make them days where no homework is assigned and no tests can be given but not days off.
- I would appreciate strong consideration for the district to keep Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (as well as Good Friday)

### Other Comments

- It's very difficult to hold down a job when there are relatively FEW full five-day school weeks. Out of 43 weeks (including snow days) on the school calendar, students are in school for only 12 full weeks this year.
- Later start time is more important to our family than anything else to do with scheduling. Please implement starting middle and HS at 9! Thank you.
- This survey is all fine and good—take a vote and let majority decide but perhaps spend this much time and effort on issues that really need your attention. Especially Odyssey and getting 1 superintendent for our town. Losing an over night, curriculum-based component for our kids is tragic.
- I strongly urge the School Committee to listen to the teaching staff & administrator regarding the calendar. They know best when it comes to optimal learning times for students during the year. Their opinions should be heavily counted and highly respected. As in most matters.