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Minneapolis Public Schools' last day for students to be June 8

MINNEAPOLIS – The Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Board of Education voted tonight to make the last day of school for students Friday, June 8, 2018. This change only impacts student attendance and is separate from any current or future discussions with employee bargaining groups about the total number of staff duty days. The vote came at the recommendation of Superintendent Ed Graff after reviewing achievement data since institution of a longer school year, as well as feedback from staff, families and the community.

MPS currently exceeds the state-mandated school year of 165 days by going 176 days. The district will be well within the required school-year length with the reduction of these two days. In addition, MPS has seen no improvement in academic achievement from extending our school calendar several years ago. There have been numerous studies about the relationship between achievement (as defined by standardized test scores and time). In general, when factoring in variables such as teacher quality, leadership, and state standards, it takes at least 10 additional days of instruction to see minor gains in achievement.

Additional data on attendance shows a marked increase in absences the later into June the school year goes. Furthermore, at the end of last school year, Minneapolis experienced a number of extremely hot days that proved detrimental to student learning in buildings without air conditioning, none of which are used as summer school locations. The district heard from a number of families who felt the school year was too long and student learning diminished the further into June classes were held.

This was reflected in a recent MPS budget values survey, which showed staff and families were open to changes in the length of the school calendar. A clear majority of survey respondents favored eliminating the last two days for the current school year, though there was feedback showing some people were less inclined to support changes unless mitigating actions were taken for student learning during those two days. MPS is currently exploring how to provide resources and support to families and students for June 11 and 12.

Beginning Jan. 15, check mpls.k12.mn.us for updates and resources for families.

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