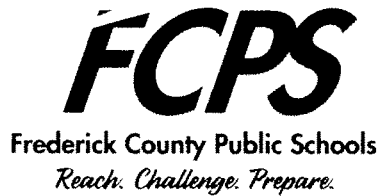


OFFICE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION &
LEADERSHIP PreK-12
191 South East Street
Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-696-6818 phone
301-696-6801 fax
www.fcps.org



Tracey Lucas
Executive Director
tracey.lucas@fcps.org

Cheryl Bales
Senior Executive Secretary
cheryl.bales@fcps.org

February 4, 2014

Mr. William Cappe
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Mr. Cappe,

For the past two years, the Frederick County Public School Calendar Committee has put forth great effort to establish an instructional calendar for the families and students of Frederick County. To that end, the committee, consisting of parent, teacher, administrator, business, transportation, curriculum and central office representatives has worked diligently to develop a school year calendar that focuses on instruction above all else.

The committee spent significant time researching calendars across the state and nation as well as researching start of day and length of day. As the committee developed proposed calendars, it presented the calendars for broad-based stakeholder feedback via the Frederick County Public Schools website, social media and community meetings led by our Board of Education. The Committee feels strongly that local input from local stakeholders provides the best guidance to the local Board of Education which ultimately makes this decision.

The Frederick County Public School Calendar Committee firmly supports school year calendar decisions remaining at the local level. With two of our committee members currently serving on the State Labor Day Task Force, and having heard the rationale for a state-mandated post-Labor Day start for all Maryland schools, our committee is fundamentally opposed to school calendars being driven by economics and not instruction. Our committee asserts that it is critically important that local autonomy be established and recommend the school calendar for the subsequent school year remain intact. The committee also maintains that the following are critical to an instructional calendar and have not been fully considered by the Task Force:

- local preference of parents, students and community members
- weather related impact on individual districts which are geographically diverse
- ongoing professional development and training needs of individual systems
- state and local testing windows/mandates
- extra-curricular programs
- optimal learning environment for students pre K – 12.
- local community events

Again, the Frederick County Public School Calendar Committee respectfully reiterates its position that the school calendar remain under the authority of local Boards of Education. This is the only way to maintain a calendar that meets the needs of the individual districts and focuses on instruction, not economics.

Respectfully,

Paulette Anders, Co- Chair, Frederick County Calendar Committee
Tracey Lucas, Co- Chair, Frederick County Calendar Committee