RESTRUCTURING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR: A SURVEY OF SELECTED EASTERN SHORE SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S ATTITUDES

BY

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By affixing our signitures to this page, we hereby accept this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters in Education Degree.

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Dr. R. Allan Gorsuch has been instrumental in providing the names and addresses of the sample population, as well as providing timely feedback, support, and suggestions.

My sincere thanks goes out to these three men, with their help, this Masters thesis has been made possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: RESTRUCTURING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR:
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SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S ATTITUDES

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This thesis examines the topic of year-round school. The purpose is two-fold; 1) to study both the benefits and drawbacks of the year-round calendar as published in professional literature, and 2) to assess current attitudes of selected secondary school administrators on matters pertaining to the changing of the traditional school calendar.

While it is evident that not every article or work can be cited that pertains to the year-round calendar, it was discovered that an overwhelming majority of published work reflects positively on the year-round calendar.

The findings of this study were based upon analysis of data collected from a survey of fifty-six (56) administators and their

attitudes towards the year-round calendar. The survey of attitudes of secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland indicated a support for instructional and learning related outcomes of the year-round calendar. However the respondents had reservations in the areas of extracurricular activities and other nonacademic items associated with the year-round calendar.

Although additional research is still needed on this subject, there appears to be support for the philosophies and learning outcomes of the year-round calendar. By indicating support for various topics associated with the year-round calendar, administrators have shown that the year-round calendar is worthy of further investigation as a means of restructuring schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

" What we are talking about here is nothing less than fundamentally changing the structure and rhythm of American life" (Jordan, 1994, p. A 1), so spoke Education Secretary Richard Riley in response to the idea of scrapping the current school schedule (50 minute periods, 6 hour school days, and the 180 day school calendar) in favor of a more rigorous one.

The traditional school calendar used in most of the nations schools is obsolete. It is outmoded instructionally and difficult to defend academically. A point that is seldom thought of, and often overlooked, is the fact that this calendar was never designed for instructional effectiveness in the first place (Ballinger, 1987). Instead, it was designed to support the agricultural economy of the 1800's (Ballinger, 1987). The calendar of operation in use today in most American schools has its roots imbedded deeply in the agrarian society that we once were (Christie, 1987).

This summer many students will take a three month vacation from learning. Very few will spend time on the farm helping with the

harvest. In all too many instances students will do nothing during the summer (Ballinger, 1988). Of what value to society is a situation in which teenagers are free to roam the neighborhood streets, unsupervised, unemployed, and unoccupied for up to three months (Ballinger 1988)? By following an out dated calendar, schools have contributed to a rise in problems experienced by youth delinquency agencies, social agencies, and police departments across the country (Ballinger 1988).

Though the negative social effects of having summers off are evident (Ballinger, 1987), its effects on student achievement are not as clear. Many could argue that students need a break from school to explore and learn in an environment outside school. Others may say that kids should be given a chance to be kids. Some teachers may contend that summer break is needed so that remediation and summer school can bring slow students up to par. Parents may insist they need this time to take family vacations that would not interfere with their children's classes. These seem like very good reasons for keeping the traditional school calendar. After all, if it's not broken, don't fix it.

The premise of this study is to raise the question once again to educators, what are the attitudes towards and the evidence available to support an alternative calendar? This study will

present a variety of views on the changing of the traditional school calendar. Additionally, selected secondary school administrators will be surveyed to determine if modifying of the traditional school calendar is a viable approach that could be used to improve the academic achievement of students attending schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Statement of the Problem

Educators throughout the country are developing new ways to better educate our nation's students. On the Eastern Shore of Maryland, administrators of poor and rural districts find it hard to meet difficult state mandates on both attendance and achievement. Many middle and secondary schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland are currently piloting or planning restructure in their schools, i.e. outcomes based education, site-based management, schools within schools, or four period school days.

Administrators realize that they must try to adapt today's schools to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and rapidly

changing student body.

This study will focus on one way in which schools may adapt to meet these changes. By examining selected secondary school administrator attitudes toward changing the traditional school calendar and reviewing the history of, and the current research on modifying the traditional calendar, it is hoped that the following question can be answered: Would the restructuring of the school calendar provide an effective means of improving the education of students attending secondary schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is two-fold; (1), to determine the benefits and the drawbacks of changing the traditional school calendar, and (2), to access current attitudes of selected secondary school administrators on matters pertaining to changing the traditional school calendar.

Importance of the Study

Implementing any change requires leadership. In the field of education much of this leadership is in the hands of school level administrators. Operating schools under a year-round calendar is one such change administrator may be called upon to oversee. Before a school district could consider going to a year-round calendar it would most certainly need to have the support and backing of school level administrators.

If it is shown that school level administrators agree with the philosophies indicative of the YRC and that they support outcomes associated with the YRC, then surely this avenue for possible change has potential for further investigation as an alternative to methods currently employed.

Definition of Terms

Traditional School calendar (TSC)- a school year in which students attend school from September to June and have three summer months off .

Year-Round calendar (YRC)- a school year in which students receive some type of instruction during the three summer months and do not have these months off

Student Achievement- the success or lack there of, experienced by students both academically (MSPAP, SAT, promotion and graduation rates) and socially (discipline, jobs, peer relations)

Secondary School Administrator- assistant principals, vice principals, and principals in middle schools, junior high schools, and senior high schools

Eastern Shore of Maryland- Cecil, Kent, Queen Annes, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worchester counties

Single-Track- reconfiguration of the TSC to one containing four periods of instruction, four equal vacation periods, and a small winter break.

Multi-Track- reconfiguration of the TSC to one made up of four single- track calendars with vacation time slots arranged in a staggered fashion.

Hypothesis *(Null)*

A majority of public secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland will not perceive the year-round calendar as a viable option to improve the achievement of secondary school students.

Subjects

The population in this study is made up of all the public secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A cluster sample was used to survey the attitudes of these administrators on various topics and beliefs concerning student learning and the changing of the traditional school calendar.

A twenty-nine (29) item questionnaire was sent to ninety-three

(93) secondary school administrators. Sixty-two (62) questionnaires were returned and tabulated resulting in a 67 % response rate.

Procedure

Ninety-three (93) questionnaires were mailed to secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland on Feburary 28, 1994 . The questionnaire packet contained: a cover letter, instructions, the survey, and a stamped return envelope. Administrators were asked to respond within two weeks upon of the receipt of the survey to meet the March 18, 1994 cut-off date.

The survey instrument consisted of twenty (20) statements related to the student learning and changing the traditional school calendar. Subjects were asked to rate the attitudes on each topic in accordance with a Likert-type scale. A 5-point (strongly agree to strongly disagree) Likert-type scale was used in conjunction with each statement.

Questions #1- #5 asked for an expression of attitudes on theories concerning learning and instruction. Questions #6 -#10 asked for an expression of attitudes concerning extending the school day. Questions #11- #15 asked for an expression of

attitudes towards increasing the number of student days per year. Questions #16- #20 asked for an expression of attitudes towards restructuring the present school calendar in order to incorporate several smaller breaks instead of one giant summer break. After each section space was left for additional comments.

Limitations of this Study

This study was not without limitations. This study surveyed attitudes, which are quite ambiguous and hard to quantify. It was of a narrow scope, surveying a distinct population (secondary principals and vice-principals), from a specific area (Eastern Shore of Maryland), which is comprised of a limited number of schools from which to draw the sample.

The research conducted required the participation of secondary administrators in the completing and returning of the questionnaires. Yet another limitation considered was the likelihood that the administrators surveyed may be biased to the TSC by virtue of their past experience. Additionally, the modern YRC has only been in use for about 15 years, mostly in the western United States. Because of its relatively brief and sporadic history, no long term data were yet available for study.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Although year-round schooling is operating in over 400 schools nation wide (Ballinger1987), most of the research pertaining to the YRC is based primarily on west coast schools, i.e. Oxnard Unified, Pajararo Valley, and Los Angeles school systems, many of which have a decade and a half experience under this system (Ballinger, 1987). In addition, most of the research on the YRC has taken place in the past ten years, thus there are very few long term studies available concerning the YRC. Most studies do recognize that more research is needed to effectively evaluate the YRC as a viable alternative to the TSC (Zykowski, 1991 and Brekke, 1984). And although research on the YRC is still developing, there seems to be initial data to suggest that the concept does have merit and is worth an in depth investigation(Zykowski, 1991).

To provide a more clear and contrasting view, the related research on the YRC presented in this chapter is divided into two categories. Related research that reflects negatively on the YRC

shall be presented first. Related research that reflects positively on the YRC shall be presented second.

Negative Research Findings

Stiff (1986) cites some constraints to be considered by teachers, students, and school districts before adopting a multi-track year-round calendar.

Teachers

Stiff (1986) suggests that the YRC is most easily implemented at the elementary level. The reason being that teachers generally have the same group of students all day, and scheduling teacher rooms during different tracks is not as complicated as it would be if the students were constantly changing rooms as is done in high schools. In addition teachers must plan lessons more carefully because of time constraints imposed by the more frequent breaks. As time goes by, stress levels from the high expectations of a new YRC can build up and have detrimental effects on teachers morale, productivity, and the overall learning climate (Stiff, 1986).

Students

Not only does teacher scheduling become a problem, but student scheduling becomes increasingly difficult as students seek more electives and extra-curricular activities. The YRC presents obstacles for those students wishing to take non-core classes such as foreign languages, technology education, band, or advanced classes (Stiff, 1986). In order to assure sufficient enrollment in these non-core classes, many students will be forced to jump tracks. The more this happens the less effective the YRC will be (Stiff, 1986). Students who wish to participate in sports and extra-curricular activities will be faced with returning to school even when they are not scheduled for classes to participate in these activities (Stiff, 1986).

School Districts

Compounding the restrictions faced by teachers and students are handicaps in school site management. For example, no district should consider the YRC unless it is prepared to air condition the schools involved (Stiff,1986). The additional energy cost associated with air conditioning should also not be overlooked. School building maintenance will be drastically affected (Stiff, 1986). When does the roof get tarred? When will the floors get stripped and waxed? When will the halls get repainted?

Minor maintenance can be done at night and on the weekends providing the school can afford overtime pay. Major maintenance will have to take place when the students are in the building and will adversely effect their concentration and learning (Stiff, 1986).

The results of surveys of parents, students, teachers, staff, and principals of Cajon Valley, a year-round school, showed all groups to be in favor the YRC according to Christie (1988). However, despite these positive results, some concerns were raised. There has been strong opposition among some teachers to a year-round program, specifically this opposition is over the disruption of the traditional summer vacation (Hoffman, 1991). As Stiff stated earlier, teachers were troubled by the frequent cleaning out their classrooms at the end of their track instead of just once before summer. Another concern brought up by teachers was the difficulty in pursuing graduate studies under the YRC. Principals and other administrators were not immune to the negative effects of the YRC. However, principals surveyed in the Cajon Valley school district reported only one obstacle encountered under the YRC, that was the increased work load when compared to their previous work load under the TSC (Christie, 1989).

Academically, (Mazzarella, 1984) points out that increasing

school time results in only modest gains in achievement, and that the cost of this extension are disproportionate to any instructional gains. Similarly, (Heyn, 1986) says that students who are involved in year-round schools tend to do no better afterwards than those who did not attend.

Positive Research Findings

Milton Goldberg, executive director of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning believes that, " we need to explode the old-time metaphors, forget about the 50-minute class and the 180 day year." (Jordan, 1994, p. A 1) Goldberg, who directed research in the 1983 report Nation at Risk, states that he is hopeful that the new report, Prisoners of Time, will spur local school districts to reexamime the issue of time, just as the earlier study set off a decade of school restructuring (Jordan, 1994).

(Glines, 1987) points out that opportunities for lifelong learning are becoming an essential new age characteristic as the world edges toward the 21st century. The YRC extends the learning opportunities available to students by keeping the school doors

open more days a year. After all, it does not make sense for community learning centers (schools) to stand empty three months a year. Do communities close libraries, museums, and day care centers for the same period?

(Gitlin, 1988) asserted that most YRC programs were originally adopted to reduce overcrowding, but many schools have remained on the YRC even after their space problems had vanished. Experts surmise that resistance to the YRC stems primarily from a resistance to change. Further, the YRC is designed for the way people learn, which is on a continual basis. Teachers stated that their students generally retain what they have learned upon returning from a three week vacation, whereas after a three month summer vacation, they would have to devote an entire month to review (Glitin, 1988).

Upon a review of research relating to the YRC, (Zykowski, 1991) found that school districts have experimented with modifications to the TSC for three reasons: (1) to implement creative curriculum programs, (2) to house more students, (3) to save money. While housing more students and saving money was achieved in the Los Angles Unified School Districts, to date no school has dropped YRC for academic reasons. Furthermore, a recent University of Southern California study showed that students

in year-round schools outperformed students in traditional schools on the California Achievement Test (Gitlin, 1988). Despite the fact that few schools have changed to the YRC solely to increase student achievement, many are now considering this outcome as a primary motive for change.

Ballinger (1987) reports that the Multi-Track YRC was originally designed to handle overcrowding, and has handled that purpose very well. In addition, it has proven itself instructionally.

According to Ballinger, the TSC, with its needlessly long summer vacation, interrupts instructional continuity. And the need for an extensive review in September takes its toll on the achievement outcomes of most students. The students most affected by this long break are the students most at risk such as slower students who need a continuous learning pattern to effectively learn. Additionally these students lose ground during the vacation at a much faster rate than bright students. The four to six week review that takes place after vacation for the benefit of the slower students is, for the most part, wasted time for the average student.

With the rise in non-English speaking households in the U.S., formal language instruction is best taught on a continuous basis (Ballinger, 1987). A long summer vacation is disruptive to this

training. For most students, the language they use during the summer will be the language of the community.

When Ballinger analysed schools with a decade of experience using the YRC, he drew several conclusions. First, students in year-round schools do as well as or better than their September to June counterparts. Second, attendance for both teachers and students is better in schools operating under the YRC. Third, vandalism goes down in year-round schools when compared to traditional schools. Finally, the cost per pupil remained the same or went down in year-round schools, when compared to traditional schools.

Additionally, students benefitted after graduating. By using a multi-track calendar, schools can graduate students throughout the year, thus reducing the intense competition for a limited number of jobs available each June.

Educationally, summer school has been advocated as a strategy to improve achievement, increase attendance (Ballinger, 1987), reduce the number of students who must repeat a grade (Dougharty, 1981), and lower the dropout rate (Heyns, 1981). Similarly, (Merino, 1983) adds that the YRC eliminates summer vacations, when many students lose ground; therefore it has been advocated as a means to eliminate summer losses.

These losses are most evident among disadvantaged students according to (Heyns, 1986). Evidence is growing that the YRC enhances academic achievement for all students, not just low-income, limited-English speaking, and disadvantaged students (Brekke, 1990).

(Brekke, 1990) gathered the following results of studies on the YRC from across the nation.

In 1983, Houston tried a year-round program that resulted in significant academic improvement. A report from the Center for Advanced Human Studies states that year-round programs which substitute several shorter vacation breaks for the traditional 3-month summer vacation, enhanced the momentum and continuity of instruction and produce high payoffs for educationally and economically disadvantaged students (Brekke, 1990).

Madeline Hunter, in Retention Theory for Teachers, states that the relation of practice to retention is more complex than doing something again and again and again. It requires that we distribute practice over a long period of time rather than massing our practice in a short period of time (Brekke, 1990).

Dr. Hunter advises that mass practice is necessary at the beginning of a learning, then it is necessary to distribute practice.

The massing of practice makes for fast learning; Distributed practice makes that learning endure (Brekke, 1990).

The traditional calendar wasn't structured for educational reasons, in fact the three month break in instructional continuity violates the most basic principles of effective schools research and learning theory (Ballinger, 1987).

A New York State Board of Regents study in 1978 found that advantaged students learn an average of one year and three months "worth of knowledge" during the school year, and an average of one additional months worth in the summer, for a total of one year and four months growth. A disadvantaged student learns an average of one year and one months growth of knowledge during the school year, and then loses three to four months worth during the summer , for a net growth of only seven to eight months. At the end of seven years, the advantaged child scores at the ninth-grade level, the disadvantaged child scores at the fourth- to fifth-grade level and becomes a potential dropout (Brekke, 1990).

In Utah, Brigham Young University professor, Adrian Van Mondfrans, has recently completed a three-year longitudinal study showing greater gains on test scores for year-round students than for those on the traditional schedule (Brekke, 1990).

A national coalition based at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, The Quality Education for Minorities Projects, recommended after a two-and-a-half-year research effort that minority students benefit significantly from year-round schooling (Brekke, 1990).

During those years when the Oxnard School district maintained separate year-round and traditional schools, they found that the proficiency test scores and the California Assessment Program (CAP) scores were consistently and significantly higher at the year-round schools (Brekke, 1990).

(Ballinger, 1988), an advocate for change, suggests many instructional benefits of the YRC. Learning is more continual, memory loss is reduced by shortening summer vacation, in a nation with an increasing number of non-English speaking residents students are given more continuous language exposure, and remediation can occur throughout the year by using more frequent periods rather than limiting it to summer school after students have experienced nine months of failure and frustration.

In addition to these instructional benefits, Ballinger (1988) suggests several non-instructional benefits as well. Substantial savings in operational and capital outlay cost, adequate salaries to draw our top graduates into the teaching field, reduced class

size, and most importantly, keeping "at-risk" children off the street and in the classroom.

Principals, the focus of this study, reported that while overseeing schools that operated under the year-round calendar, not only did students have better attendance, but teacher attendance improved as well (White, 1987). One administrator said that it was not the calendar, in fact, that affects school attendance. Rather, the fact that a school that operates 252 days a year makes it possible for it to develop a characteristic of an outstanding school that does attract students (White, 1987). Additionally, principals watched the dropout rate, previously 5 % under the TSC, drop to just 2 % under the YRC (White, 1987). Because of the flexibility offered under a YRC, principals in year-round schools say they can maintain discipline in a more relaxed atmosphere, year-round schools allow teachers and principals many more opportunities to give students a second chance (White, 1987).

The year-round school, in the opinion of experienced administrators and teachers, has shown a tendency for increasing the holding power of schools during the standard academic year. At the same time it has proven to be a feasible means for extending the length of the academic year for able and

ambitious students who take advantage of the option to enroll in classes beyond their regular attendance track (White, 1987).

(Christie, 1989), in A Report on Opinion Surveys of Parents, Students, and Staff of Four-track Year-round Schools, found that all groups were in favor of year-round school. Additionally, principals reported several strengths. One principal said that the strengths were higher teacher and student morale. Another said the retention of curriculum, less student/ teacher fatigue, and the flexible vacation schedule were all strong points. The principals surveyed in the Cajon Valley program were all strong supportors of the YRC in spite of the fact that it increased their work load (Christie,1989). The benefits they saw were more variety of programs for students, better achievement of students, and better teacher morale. Christie points out that the principals agreed on several of the perceived benefits of the program, and these benefits, more often than not, are benefits for the children.

instructional methods under the TSC vary tremendously from state to state , the methods being employed by schools operating under a YRC are diverse and unique to each school district.

This review of literature has sampled information available from these diverse and unique year-round programs. And although it is not always possible to compare " apples directly to apples," some characteristics shared by year-round programs can be identified in this review of literature.

First, a majority of the literature review for this study reflects positively on the year-round calendar. Second, most year-round calendars were originally adopted to ease overcrowding in west coast schools. Third, studies done on year-round schools cite increased student achievement, improved attendance, and higher morale of students, teachers, and administrators.

CHAPTER III

Method

The purpose of this study was to investigate the viability of changing the traditional school calendar of secondary schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. To accomplish this the researcher undertook several tasks. First a comprehensive review of literature relating to the year-round calendar was completed to fulfill the requirements of the course " Introduction to Research" offered at Salisbury State University by the Department of Education. Next, the researcher contacted the National Association for Year-Round Education for additional information, including reports on year-round studies, evaluations of year-round schools, and copies of surveys used by others conducting research on the topic throughout the country. Finally, a survey instrument was constructed that would elicit the opinions from secondary administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland toward student learning and the year-round calendar.

The subjects who participated in this study where all middle school and high school principals and assistant principals whose

schools serve students on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The results of the study were kept confidential and the responses were not identifiable by school or county. Participation in the study was voluntary. Those administrators returning the questionnaire could request a summary of this study at no charge.

Ninety-six (96) surveys were mailed on Feburary 28, 1994. Fifty-six (56) completed surveys were returned by the March 18, 1994 cut-off date. Three (3) could not be delivered as addressed. Forty (40) respondents requested a summary of the finished study.

One twenty-nine (29) item questionnaire made up of statements related to student learning and the year-round calendar was completed by each respondent. Each questionnaire was configured as part of a self-addressed stamped booklet to provide respondents ease and minimal time loss in participating in the study (see appendix B).

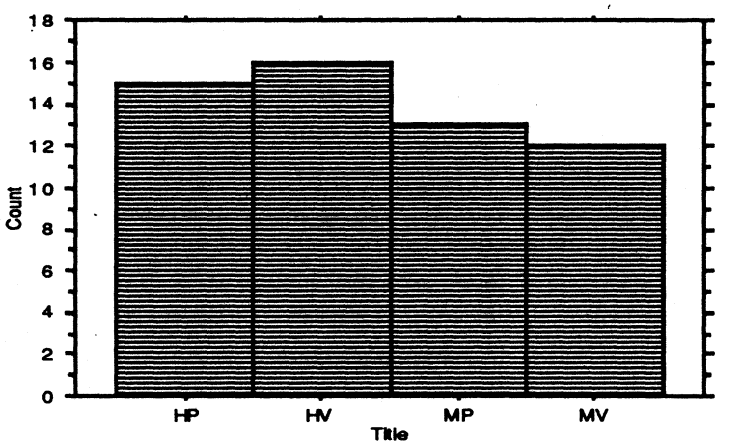
The first nine (9) items in the questionnaire were used to categorize and identify respondents by position, gender, age, length of time in district, length of contract, familiarity with the year-round calendar, and meeting MSPAP standards. The next twenty (20) questions were grouped into four categories with responses to each question given on a five (5) point Likert-type scale, one (1) representing "strongly agree" and five (5)

representing "strongly disagree." Additional space was proved for written feedback, clarification, or comments on each question.

Subjects

The subjects were all secondary school administrators employed by schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A total of sixty-two (62) subjects responded to the survey. They were identifiable by several categories. Some key group identifiers are shown in the following graphic representations of categorical variables.

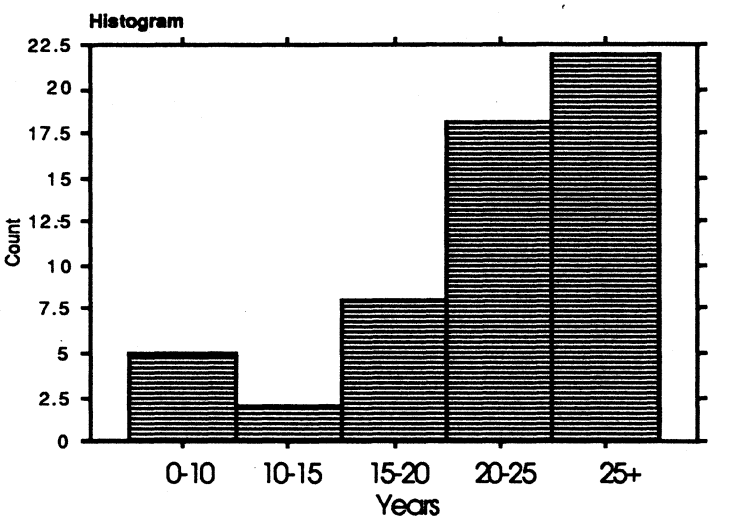
Graph #1 Position of Respondents



HP= High School Principal
HV= High School Assistant or Vice Principal
MP= Middle School Principal
MV= Middle School Assistant or Vice Principal

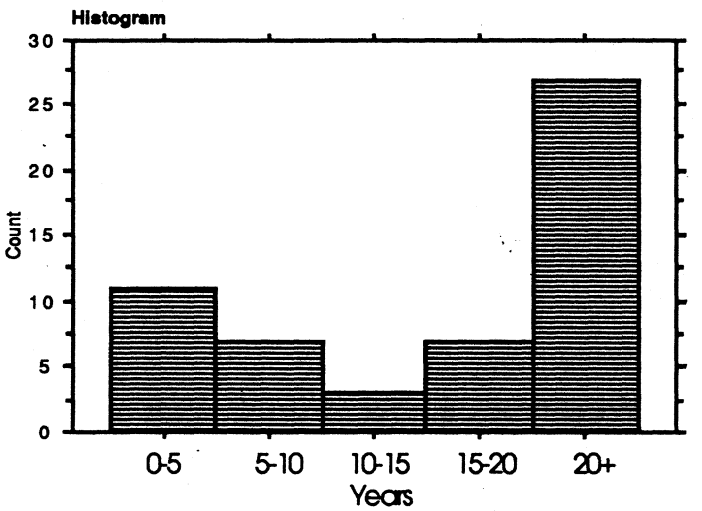
The above graph indicates the number of respondents according to their positions. The respondents were well balanced and provided a fairly equal representation of different levels within the field of secondary administration.

Graph # 2 Years in Education



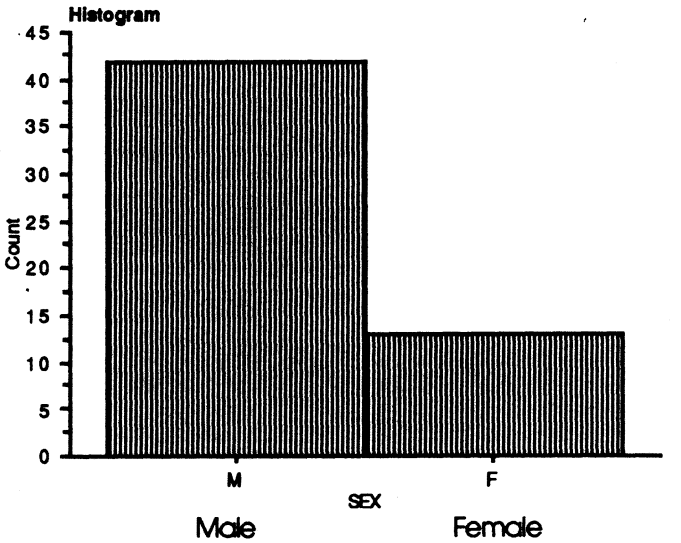
The above graph represents the number of years respondents in the sample population have been employed in the field of education. A majority of all respondents have been in education for at least twenty years. This graph does not distinguish between years as a teacher or counselor and years as a secondary school administrator.

Graph # 3 Years in Current School District



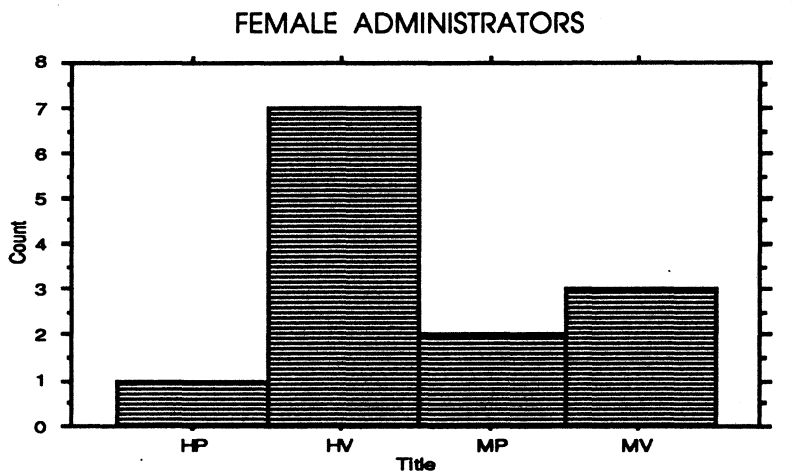
The above graph represents the number of years the respondents have been employed in their current school district. The inverted bell shape of the graph indicates a polar representation of administrators surveyed who are either relatively new to, or relatively experienced in, their current school districts.

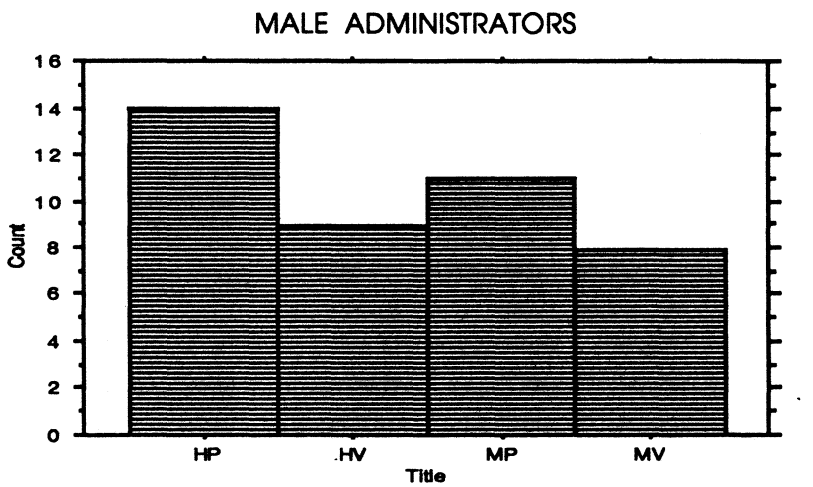
Graph # 4 Gender



The above graph represents the number of respondents by gender. Males out number females by forty-three (43) to thirteen (13).

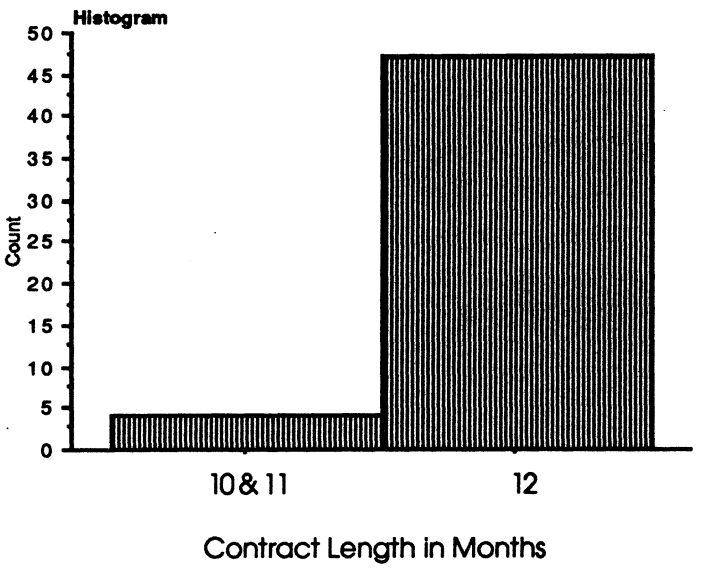
Graphs # 5 A & 5 B Position by Gender





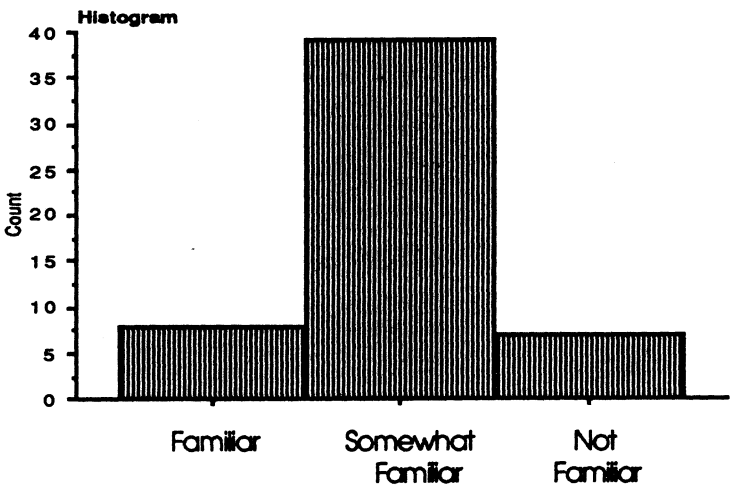
The above graphs illustrate in what positions males and females are employed. Males appear to be well represented in all positions.. Females are represented heavily as assistant high school principals and by only one female as a high school principal.

Graph # 6 Familiarity with Year-round School



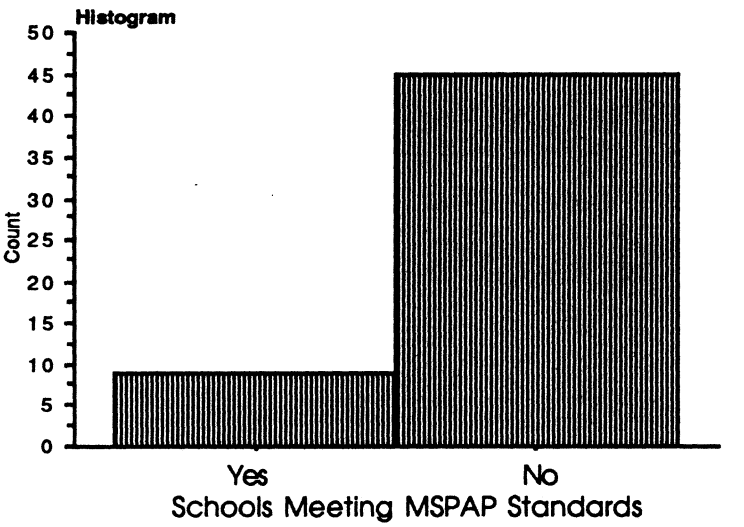
The above graph represents the number of respondents by the length of their contracts. Males and females were equally represented in this category. This category was included to determine how many administrators are already employed for the entire year.

Graph # 6 Familiarity with Year-round School



The above graph represents the degree of familiarity that the respondents had with the concept of year-round education. Forty-eight (48) respondents indicated some degree of familiarity with the year-round calendar, while eight (8) said they were not familiar with the concept.

Graph # 7 Employed in Schools Meeting MSPAP Standards



This graph indicates whether or not administrators believe that their schools will meet MSPAP standards for the 1993- 1994 school year. Forty-five (45) indicated that their schools would not meet MSPAP standards, while nine (9) indicated that they would meet MSPAP standards. It should be noted that some respondents indicated that their schools would meet " some " of the MSPAP standards, these responses were grouped with the " no " responses in formulating this graph.

Materials

The primary item utilized in conducting this study was the survey questionnaire. Several sources contributed to the development of this questionnaire: 1) A review of literature on year-round schools indicated several recurring themes, some of which were the basis for questions used in the questionnaire. 2) Also contributing to the development of these questions were copies of studies and results from others doing research on or related to the topic of year-round schooling (Appendix A). 3) And additional input on question wording and selection was provided by informal contacts with school administrators and from advisors at the university level.

One survey questionnaire was used for this study. This questionnaire was composed of twelve (12) pages organized into a mailable booklet (see appendix B). Each booklet consisted of 5 main parts.

1) A booklet cover containing the address of each subject and a stamped self-addressed page deliverable to the researcher (see appendix B).

2) A cover letter that explained briefly what this study hoped to accomplish and how the results would be disseminated (see appendix B).

3) A demographic page (see appendix B), which assisted the researcher by providing a means for grouping and statistically analyzing the data generated by the subjects' responses.

4) Four response pages containing 20 statements related to learning and the year-round calendar. Each question was followed by a 5 point Likert-type scale response section, ranging from "strongly agree (SA) " to " strongly disagree (SD)."

5) One page for additional written comment and response on the subject of year-round school and student achievement (see appendix B).

Data Analysis

Responses to categorical and Likert-type scale questions where analysed and grouped using an Apple Macintosh® computer running the program titled, StatView® by Haycock (1992). This program was used to analyse data in several ways.

A **statistical mean** was found for each Likert-scale response question. Although this was useful in providing a very general view of attitudes for each question, the mean failed to provide enough information concerning the variation of responses for each question. Thus the **standard deviation** was also computed for each question to indicate which question elicited a wide range of .differing responses. Still seeking additional information on the distribution of responses, each question was analysed for the **maximum** and the **minimum** value for each response. In addition, the **median** was computed and graphed visually showing the range and number of responses by each Likert-type scale category (SA, A, N,D, SD).

Not to be forgotten, and often quite interesting, are the written responses that many subjects included to clarify, add to, or provide additional feedback concerning issues raised

on the topic of this study. The researcher has attempted to provide a sampling of these responses as they appeared on the returned questionnaires (see appendix C).

Chapter IV presents the results of data collected during this study of administrator attitudes concerning year-round school and academic achievement.

CHAPTER IV

Results

In this chapter data gathered from the survey questionnaire will be presented. The data gathered will be presented in a variety of ways to aid the reader in understanding the results. Five (4) means of data presentation will be employed for each question under scrutiny.

1) A brief narrative describing the responses to each statement
2) A frequency distribution table
3) A histogram or graph of numerical responses
4) A sampling of written comments received for each section

The statistical data presented in this chapter were analyzed and sorted using an Apple Macintosh® computer running the program titled, StatView® by Haycock (1992). To facilitate computer assistance in generating data each SA, A, N, D, SD response was given a numerical value as follows:

Strongly Agree (SA) = 1
Agree (A) = 2
No Opinion (N) = 3
Disagree (D) = 4
Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5

Pages 47 - 78 illustrate the response percentages according to a Likert-type scale for survey questions # 1 - # 20. The data gathered from each question will now be presented in detail.

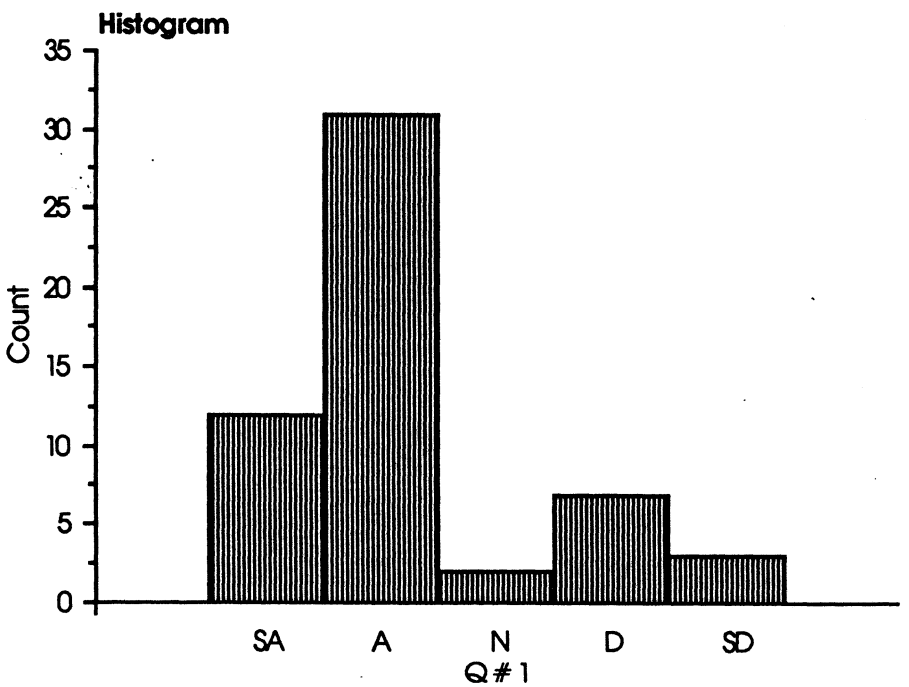
Questions # 1- # 5 elicit responses to statements on year-round school as it relates to administrator beliefs concerning **learning and instruction.**

1. Student retention is affected by breaks in instruction.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 1

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	12	21.818
2.000	3.000	31	56.364
3.000	4.000	2	3.636
4.000	5.000	7	12.727
5.000	6.000	3	5.455
	Total	55	100.000

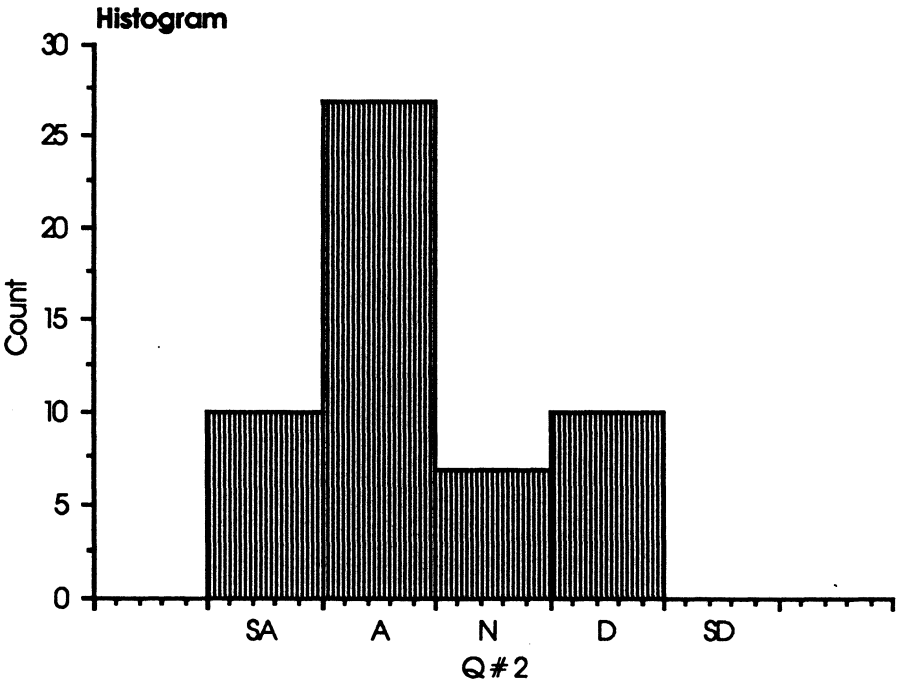


A majority of administrators agree that student retention is affected by breaks in instruction. This is important because the long summer break represents a significant break and disruption of learning for most students.

2. Slower students forget information at a faster rate than brighter students.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 2

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	10	18.519
2.000	3.000	27	50.000
3.000	4.000	7	12.963
4.000	5.000	10	18.519
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	54	100.000



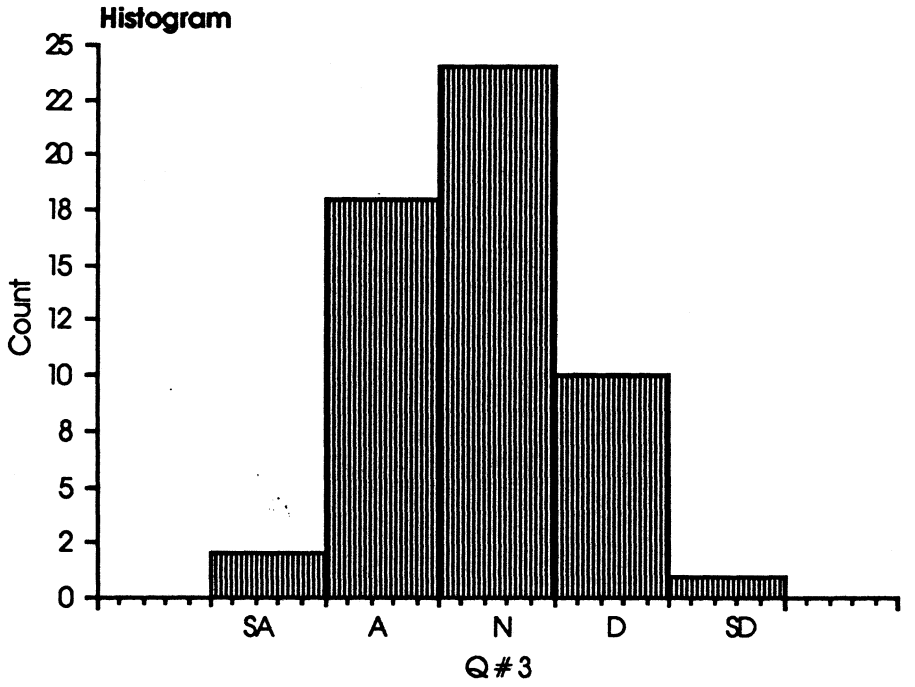
A majority of administrators agree that slower students forget information at a much faster rate than brighter students. This is important because it means that during the summer break, they believe slower students lose ground. Making it even more difficult to bring them up to grade level when school resumes in September.

3. Students who go to school year-round will do no better than traditional students on standardized test.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 3

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	2	3.636
2.000	3.000	18	32.727
3.000	4.000	24	43.636
4.000	5.000	10	18.182
5.000	6.000	1	1.818
	Total	55	100.000

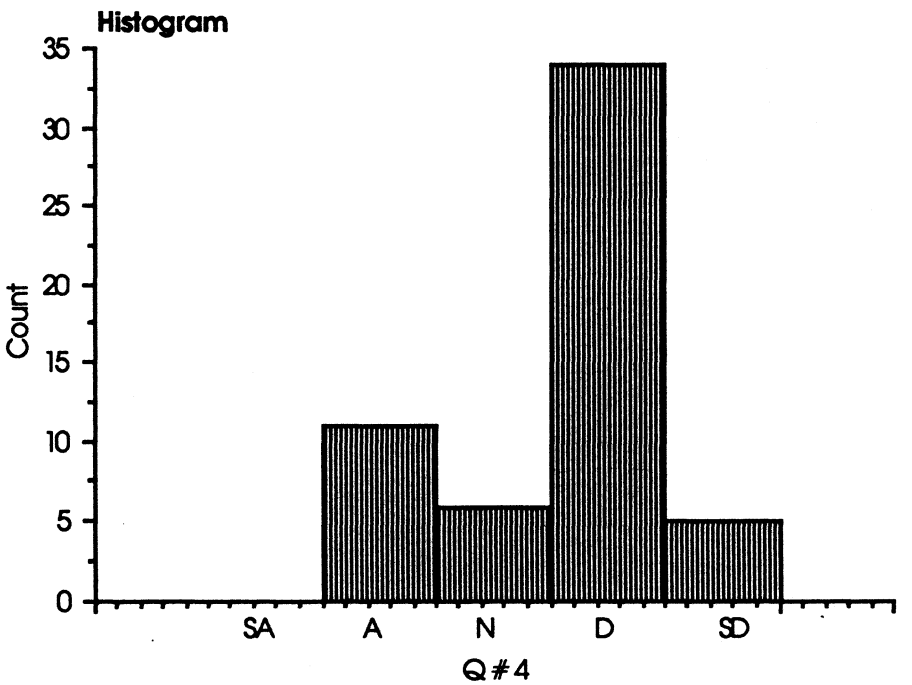


A fairly even distribution exist concerning this statement. However, there is a slight positive skewness due to the large number of responses in the" agree " column. This would indicated that administrators do not think that year-round schooling would improve scores on standardized test.

4. There is little time wasted in traditional schools on the review of old material.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 4

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	0	0.000
2.000	3.000	11	19.643
3.000	4.000	6	10.714
4.000	5.000	34	60.714
5.000	6.000	5	8.929
	Total	56	100.000



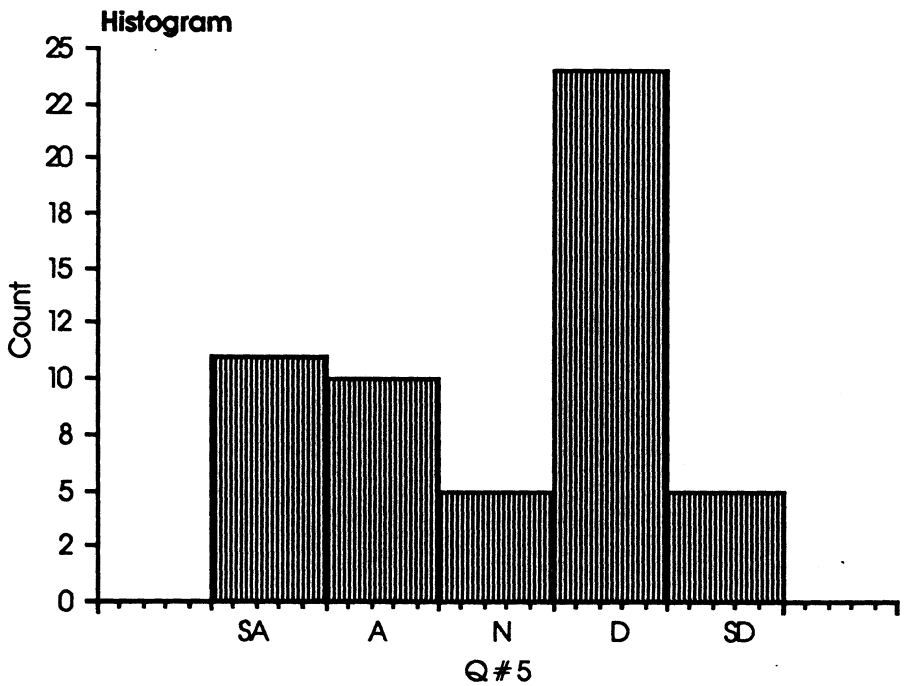
A large number of respondents disagree that there is little time wasted on the review of old material. In many subjects the review of, or reacquaintance with, old material occupies the first month of school. Administrators in this survey viewed that as wasted time.

5. A students' best models for speech, vocabulary, and behavior exist at home.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 5

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	11	20.000
2.000	3.000	10	18.182
3.000	4.000	5	9.091
4.000	5.000	24	43.636
5.000	6.000	5	9.091
	Total	55	100.000



Administrators were split in their response to this statement. Those responding "SA" and "A" are likely to believe that a students best models are in the home, and that school, or the other students in the school, do not set as good as example, as those models found in the home. Those responding "D"

and "SD" believe that a students' home life models are not beneficial to the student. From this response, schools can be viewed as either good or poor environments in which students choose to model their behavior, speech , and vocabulary after depending on the environment that exist at home.

Comments received on statements # 1- # 5:

Referring to # 5 (student models)

"the models are there, but could be a negative or a positive influence "

" in some cases, in others, home is not a model at all "

" best is debatable, as opposed to most influential "

" they should be, but they do not "

" clearly depends on SES "

Referring to # 2 (forgetting information)

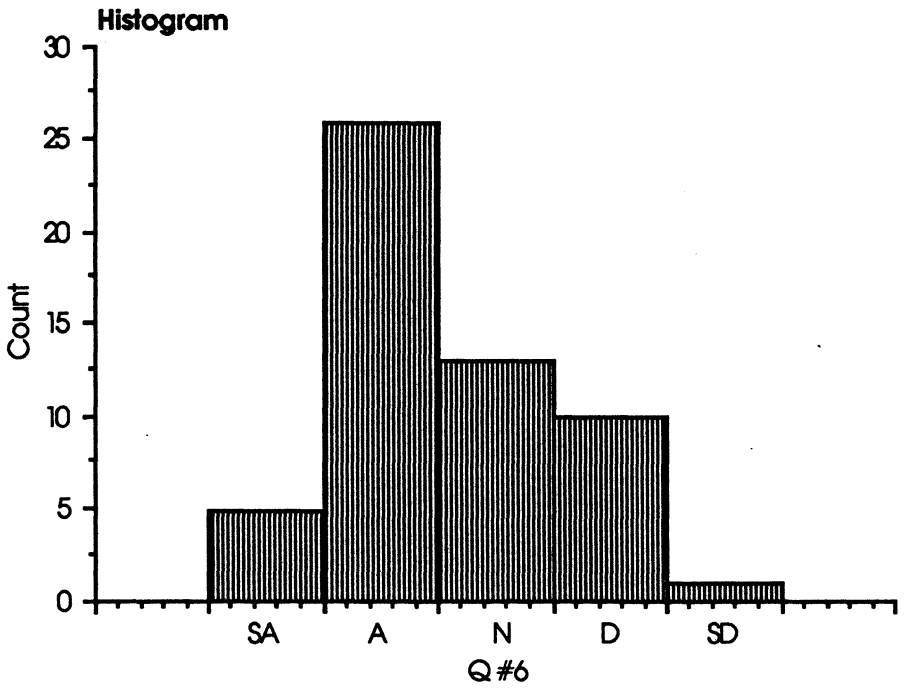
" both groups of students forget information, it hurts the slower students more because they are already behind "

Questions # 6- # 10 elicit responses from administrators concerning their beliefs on **extending the school year and providing instruction during the summer months.**

6. Allows for more flexible scheduling.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #6

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	5	9.091
2.000	3.000	26	47.273
3.000	4.000	13	23.636
4.000	5.000	10	18.182
5.000	6.000	1	1.818
	Total	55	100.000

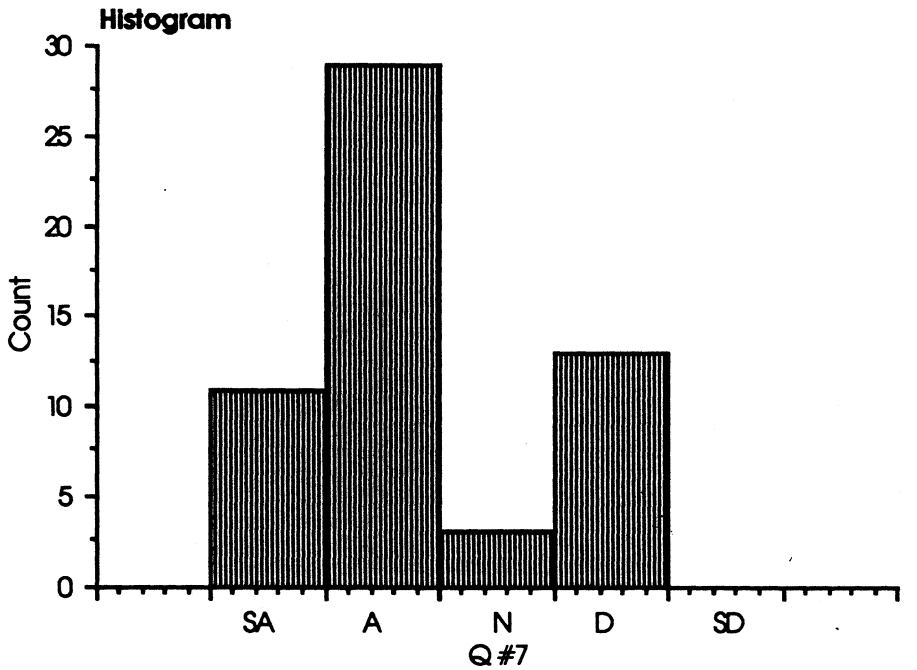


Forty-seven (47) percent of the administrators surveyed believe that extending the school year and providing instruction during the summer would offer more flexibility in scheduling. This is already being done to some extent. Schools commonly offer a summer school in which students can make-up English, Math, and other courses. If these programs were to be further developed, slower students, the ones that are most likely to drop out, could be given opportunities to stay " on-track " and not fall helplessly behind.

7. Creates problems with extra-curricular activities.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #7

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	11	19.643
2.000	3.000	29	51.786
3.000	4.000	3	5.357
4.000	5.000	13	23.214
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	56	100.000



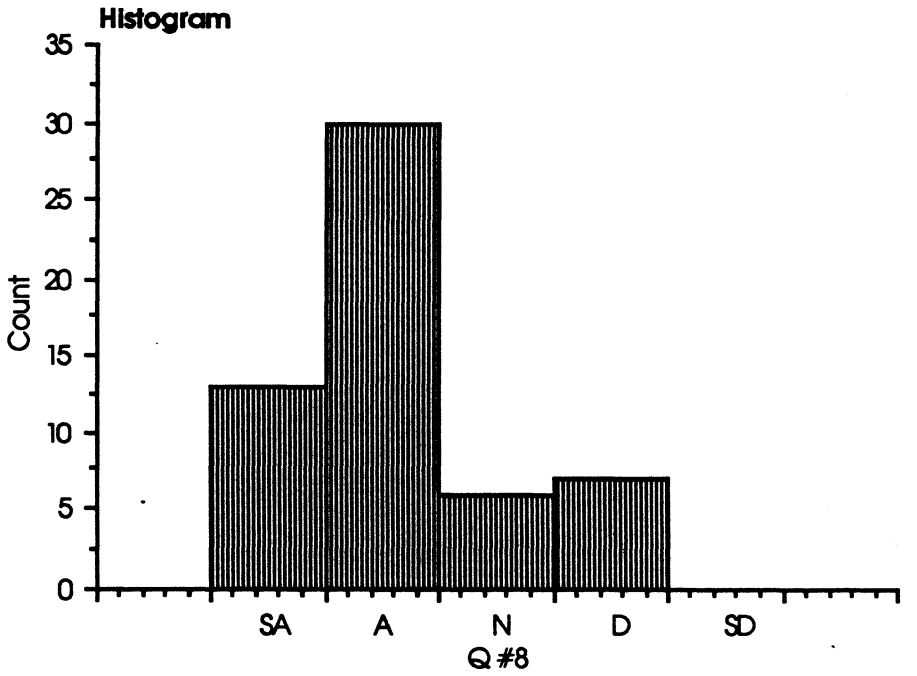
A majority of administrators believe that providing instruction during the summer will create problems with extra-curricular activities. This is true if all schools in a given region do not adopt a similar calendar or schedule. However if all schools were to operate on a similar schedule, extra-curricular activities

would be able to continue as before. One obstacle that may come up is the supervision of these extra-curricular activities which would require teachers, who may not want to or have timeto cover these activities.

8. Provides better use of facilities.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #8

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	13	23.214
2.000	3.000	30	53.571
3.000	4.000	6	10.714
4.000	5.000	7	12.500
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	56	100.000



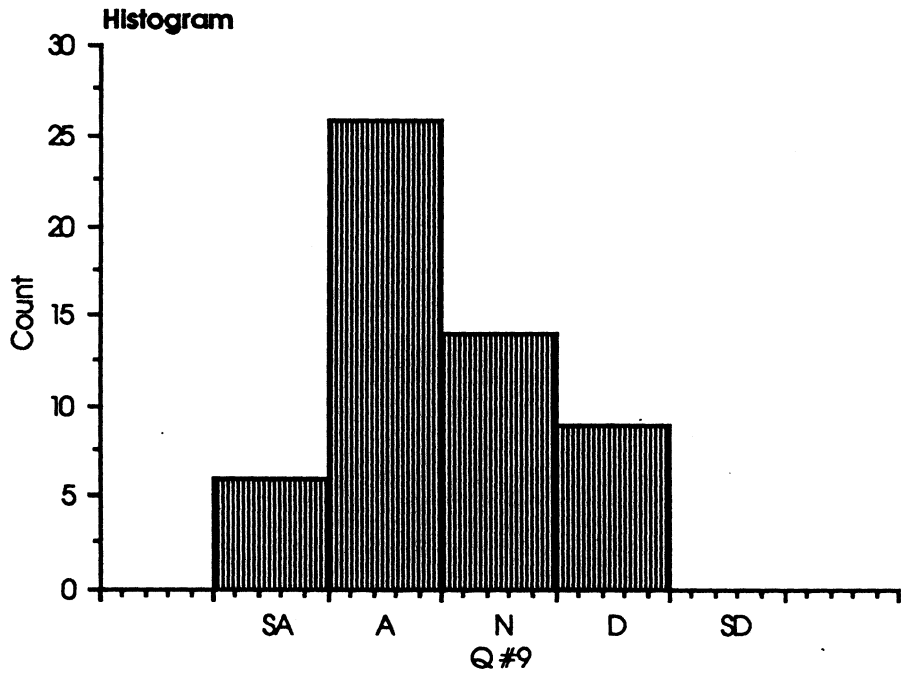
Seventy-six (76) respondents indicated that the school's physical plant would be better used if instruction was given during the summer months. Most classrooms stand empty during the summer. Obstacles such as air conditioning, teacher graduate studies, major cleaning task, renovations, and construction would have to be addressed before schools could accommodate students during the summer.

9. Offers extra remedial classes.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #9

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	6	10.909
2.000	3.000	26	47.273
3.000	4.000	14	25.455
4.000	5.000	9	16.364
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	55	100.000

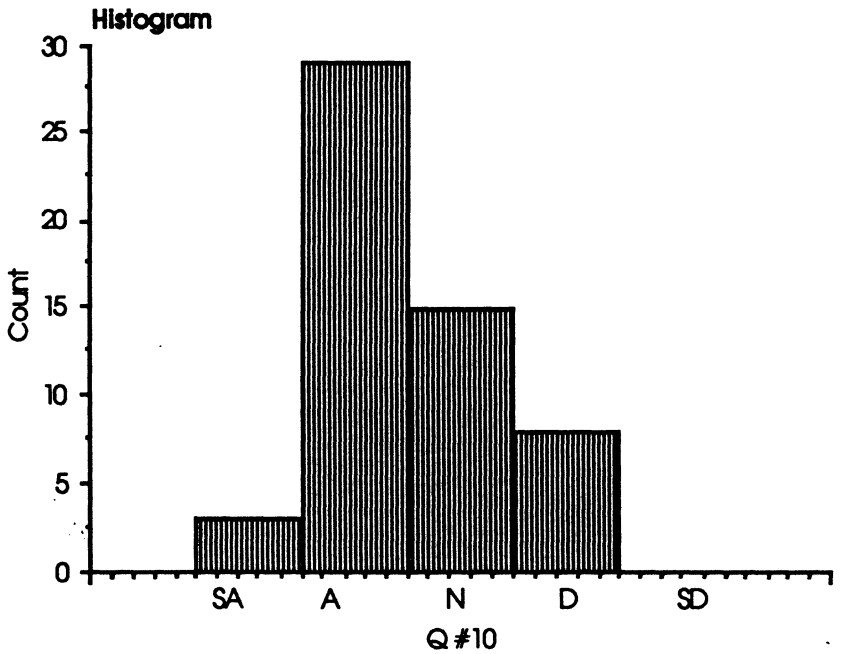


Fifty-eight (58) percent of the respondents agreed that extra remedial classes could be offered by presenting instruction in the summer. This is currently being done already in " summer schools." Many administrators already see the value of offering these classes to slower students.

10. Students learn best when instruction is given continuously throughout the entire year.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #10

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	3	5.455
2.000	3.000	29	52.727
3.000	4.000	15	27.273
4.000	5.000	8	14.545
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	55	100.000



A majority, fifty-eight (58) percent, of all administrators surveyed agreed that student learn best on a continual basis. The significance of this response is pivotal to the adoption of the year-round calender. Schools, teachers, and administrators exist for one purpose, to maximize the amount of learning done

by students in the public school system. Our present system is not a continual system. Are schools, teachers, and administrators doing the very best job they can if students learn on a continual basis?

Comments on statements # 6 -# 10:

" I do believe students and staff need breaks during the year. Those breaks would be more flexible in nature "

" problems with extra-curricular activities are not unsolvable if surrounding districts move to YRS "

"energy bills would be very high and summer school could not be held "

" # 10 is true theoretically, however, students will not be motivated to learn in the summer "

" continuous instruction is only one variable in how students learn best "

" this facility is used heavily by community groups "

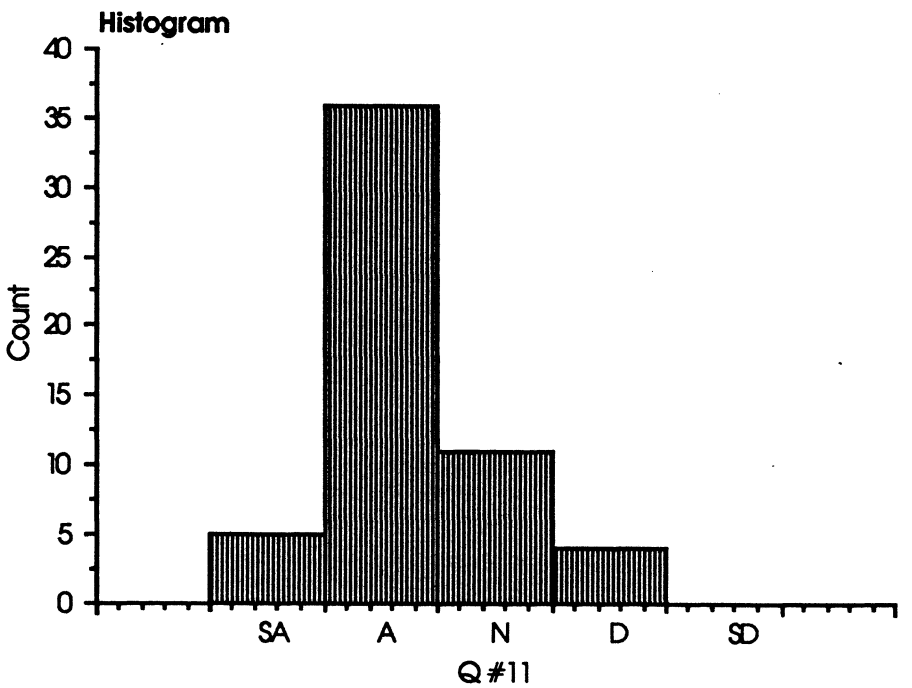
" the greatest deterrent to constant learning is the long (3 mos. - 12 wks.) break "

Questions #11 - #15 elicit responses to statements on year-round school as it relates administrator beliefs concerning **increasing the number of student attendance days per year:**

11. Makes better use of facilities.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #11

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	5	8.929
2.000	3.000	36	64.286
3.000	4.000	11	19.643
4.000	5.000	4	7.143
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	56	100.000

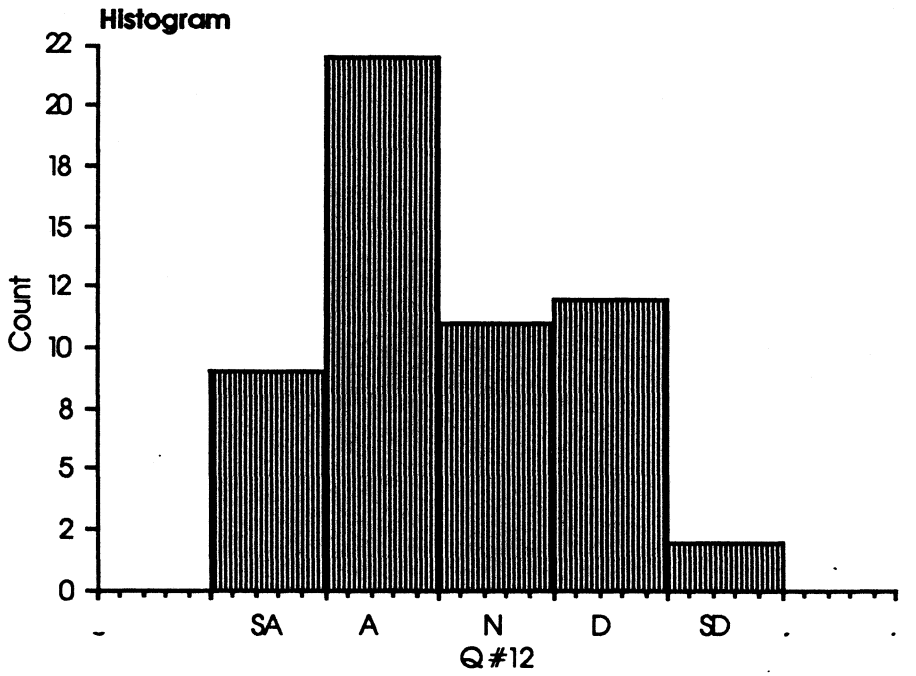


Similar to statement # 8, with administrators agreeing that facilities would be better used if students occupied classrooms more days per year. Although facilities may be better used with students in the building more often, human resources are currently being stretched to staff and maintain these facilities under the present calendar. Human resources (teachers, custodians, secretaries, etc.) would have to be increased to maintain instruction and facilities at there current levels if additional instructional days were added to the calendar.

12. Students and teachers burn out
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #12

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	9	16.071
2.000	3.000	22	39.286
3.000	4.000	11	19.643
4.000	5.000	12	21.429
5.000	6.000	2	3.571
	Total	56	100.000



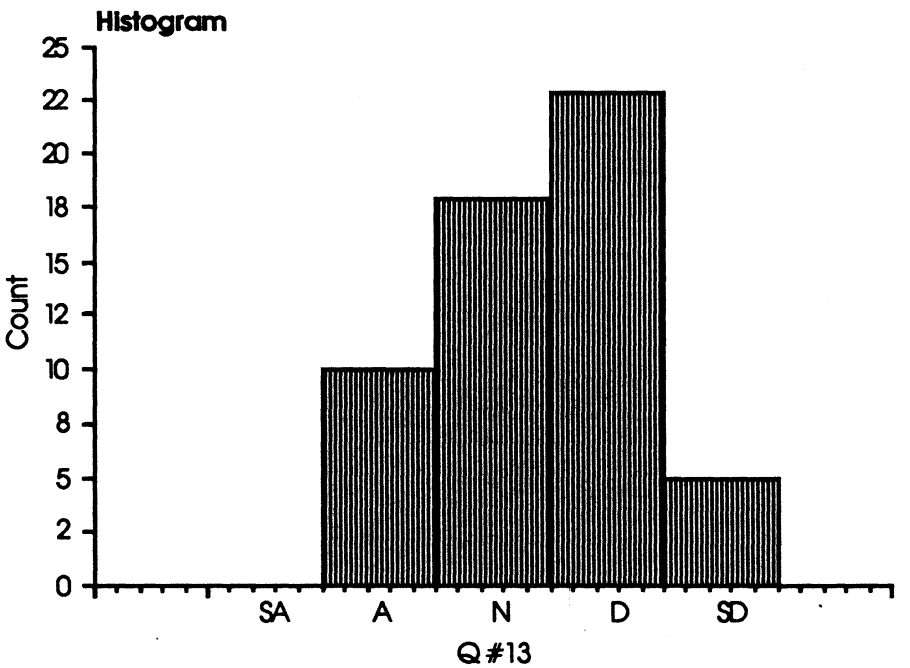
Most administrators agreed that students and teachers may burn out if required to attend more days per year. Some administators commented that better use of our present time would be a preferred alternative. This is significant

because adding more low quality time will not improve the amount of learning done by students.

13. Schools will meet MSPAP attendance requirements.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #13

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	0	0.000
2.000	3.000	10	17.857
3.000	4.000	18	32.143
4.000	5.000	23	41.071
5.000	6.000	5	8.929
	Total	56	100.000



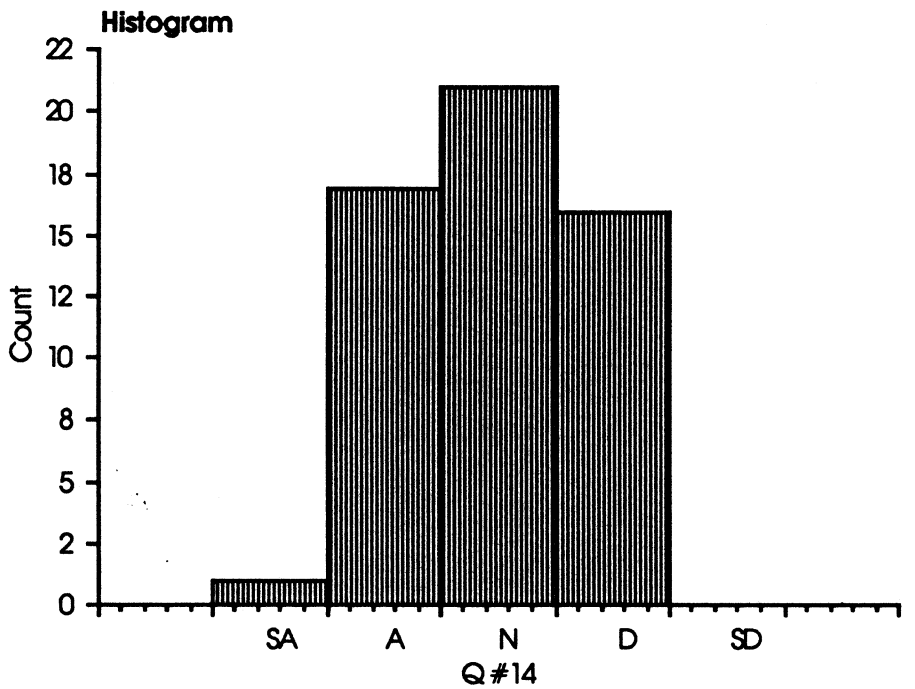
Fifty (50) percent of the respondents disagreed that increasing the number of attendance days would help schools meet student MSPAP attendance requirements. Some may have reasoned that if they are having trouble meeting the requirements now, they definitively could not meet them with additional days added to the calendar.

14. Drop out rate will increase.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #14

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	1	1.818
2.000	3.000	17	30.909
3.000	4.000	21	38.182
4.000	5.000	16	29.091
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	55	100.000



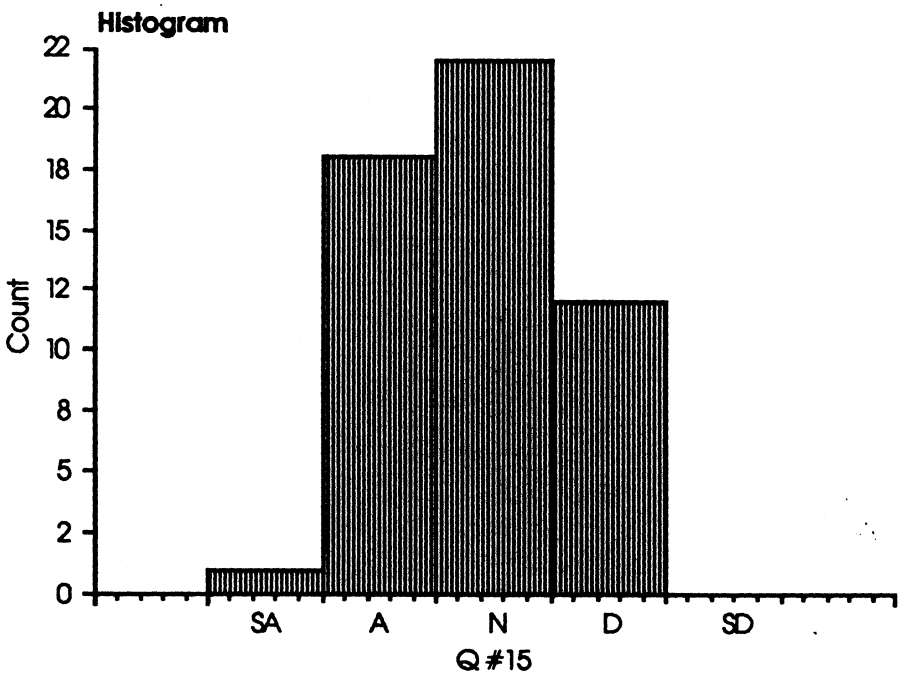
The administators surveyed did not know what effect increasing the number of attendance days would have on the drop out rate. Responses were divided evenly between " A " and " D " with a majority having no opinion on the subject.

15. Better student retention.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q #15

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	1	1.887
2.000	3.000	18	33.962
3.000	4.000	22	41.509
4.000	5.000	12	22.642
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	53	100.000



Administrator response to this statement gave only a slight indication that student retention would be increased by increasing the number of attendance days per year. Administrators may think that simply adding more days without improving teaching strategies will not produce better student retention.

Comments on Statements # 11 -# 15:

" I feel that better use of the 180 days will make a difference. Simply adding more days does not necessarily mean more learning will take place. It's what you do with the time that counts"

" student retention is also affected by relevancy of material, teaching methods, and learning modalities"

" # 13 will help academic scores (MSPAP) but may hurt attendance and drop out rate unless parents and community support it "

" students who do not get any support from home will not attend school no matter what we do, until the court system helps the school system I see little improvement "

" I see no variable in the year-round schooling which would affect these (the statements) more or less than current schooling "

" if the year is planned with more vacations of shorter duration burn out would not occur "

" please consider the fact that kids do not want to go to school in the summer unless they have too "

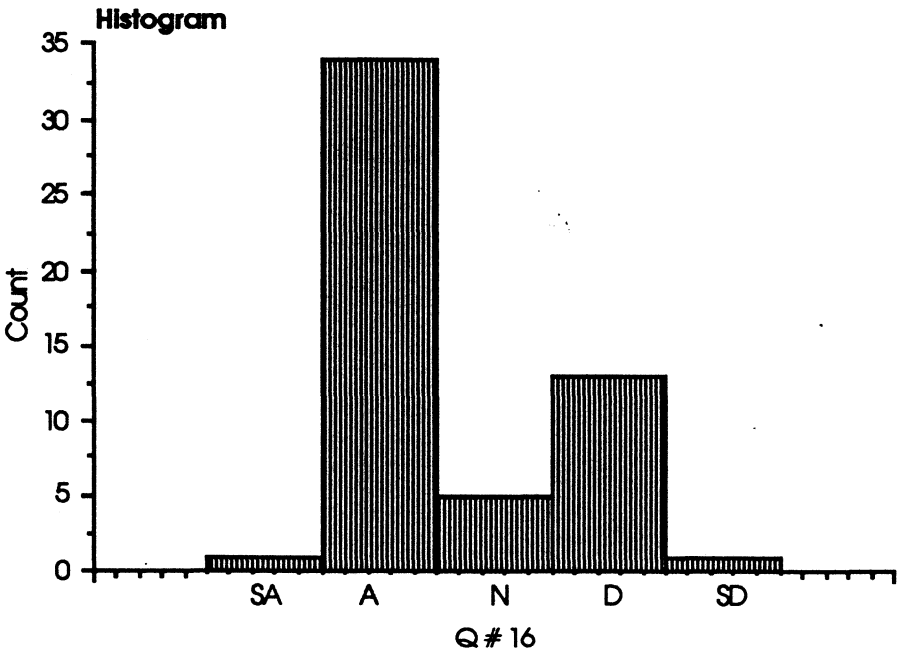
Questions #16 - #20 elicit responses to statements on year-round school as it relates administrator beliefs if the new school calender would include **several smaller breaks instead of one large break.**

16. Students will miss school because of family vacations.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 16

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	1	1.852
2.000	3.000	34	62.963
3.000	4.000	5	9.259
4.000	5.000	13	24.074
5.000	6.000	1	1.852
	Total	54	100.000

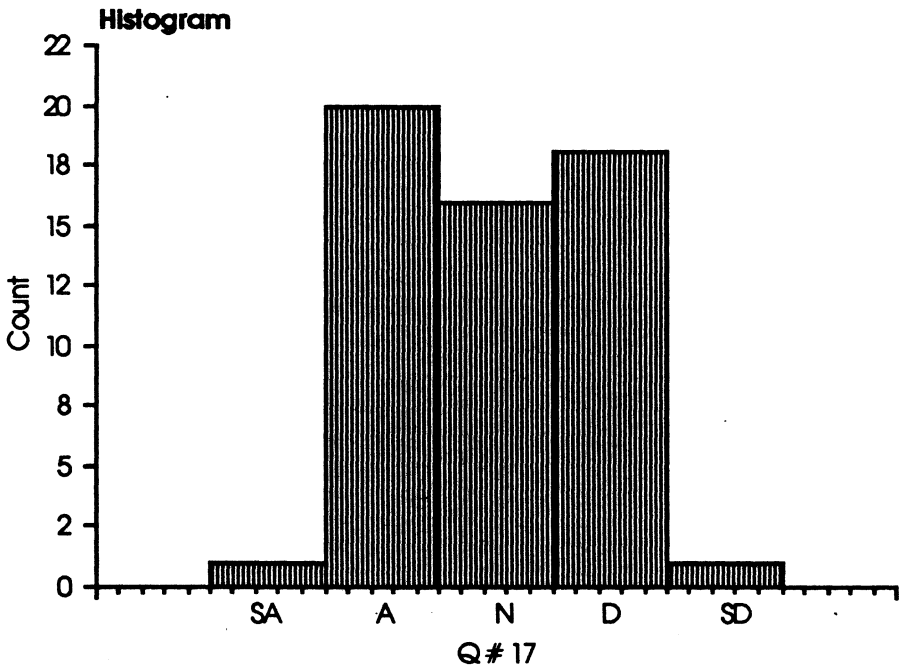


Sixty-two (62) percent of the respondents viewed this as an important issue. This is important because it implies that administrators believe most family vacations take place during the summer months. The statement they responded to indicated that there would " be several smaller breaks instead of one large break," thus administators must think that there would not be enough time during the smaller summer breaks for a family to vacation, or that families would not choose to schedule their vacations during these breaks.

17. Less student and teacher burn out.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 17

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	1	1.786
2.000	3.000	20	35.714
3.000	4.000	16	28.571
4.000	5.000	18	32.143
5.000	6.000	1	1.786
	Total	56	100.000



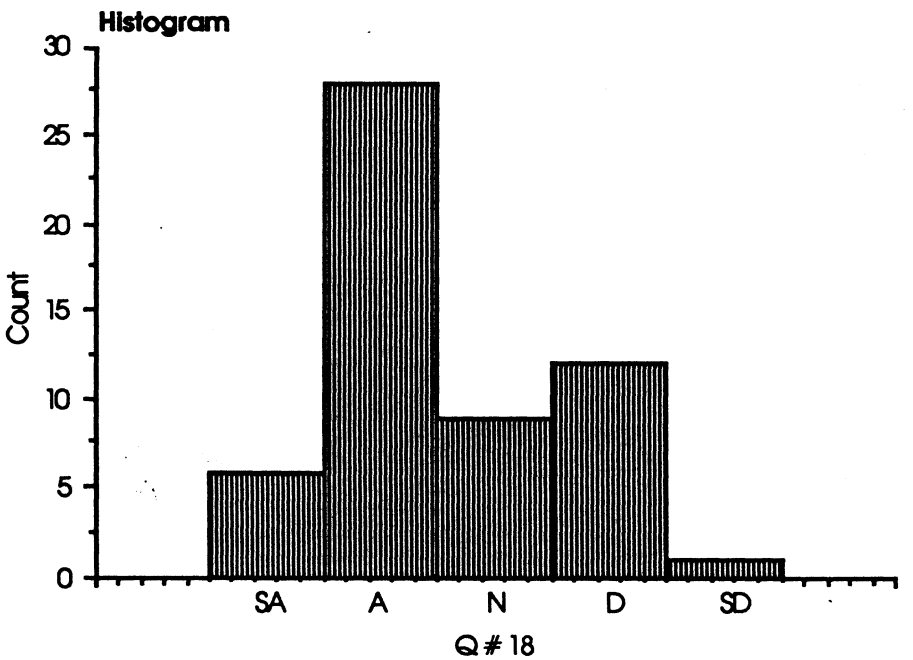
Opinions were split on the issue of teacher and student burn out if the calender included several smaller breaks instead on one large break. Those agreeing may have thought that students and teachers would enjoy several smaller breaks, and these breaks would give them a chance to rest and return to school refreshed. Those disagreeing may have viewed it from the perspective

of " beginning and end , " that is, under the current calendar there is a definite beginning and end to the school year, giving students and teachers something to look forward to.

18. Interferes with extra-curricular activities.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 18

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	6	10.714
2.000	3.000	28	50.000
3.000	4.000	9	16.071
4.000	5.000	12	21.429
5.000	6.000	1	1.786
	Total	56	100.000



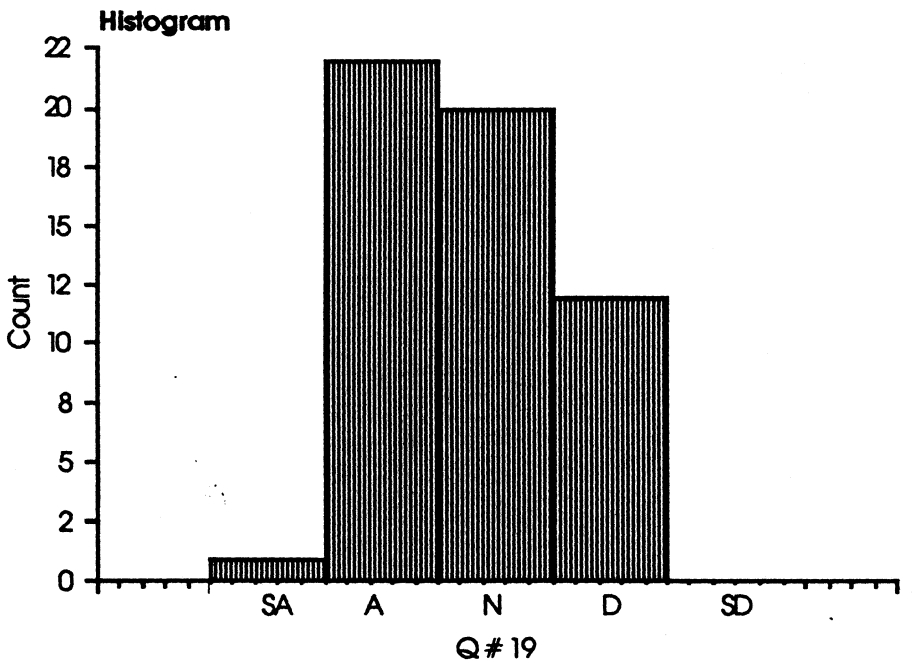
A majority, sixty (60) percent, of the respondents agreed that extra-curricular activities would be adversely affected by a calendar with several smaller breaks instead of one large break. This response is interesting in light of the current condition of extra-curricular activities such as sports. Fall sports camps begin two weeks before school in the hottest part of the summer, while

spring sports begin March 1 in sub-freezing temperatures. Many sports overlap one another, especially when teams enter post season playoffs.

19. Produces better student retention.
SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 19

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	1	1.818
2.000	3.000	22	40.000
3.000	4.000	20	36.364
4.000	5.000	12	21.818
5.000	6.000	0	0.000
	Total	55	100.000



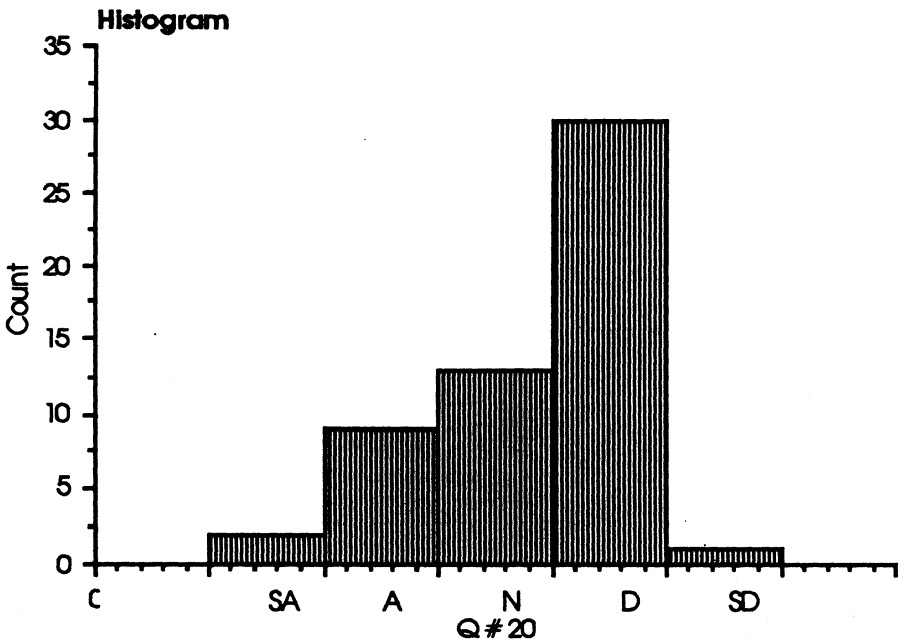
There is a slight indication from the administrator reponses to statement # 20 that students would retain more information if they had several smaller breaks instead of one large break. This corresponds with the overwhelmingly positive response to statement # 10, where fifty-eight (58) percent of those responding said that students learn best on a continual basis.

20. Creates to many interruptions of learning.

SA A N D SD

Frequency Distribution for Q # 20

From (≥)	To (<)	Count	Percent
1.000	2.000	2	3.636
2.000	3.000	9	16.364
3.000	4.000	13	23.636
4.000	5.000	30	54.545
5.000	6.000	1	1.818
	Total	55	100.000



The large number, fifty-six (56) percent, of administrators disagreed that a calendar made up of many smaller breaks instead of one large break will create too many disruptions in learning indicates that they would support frequent shorter breaks instead of the traditional summer break as it relates to the way students learn.

Comments on statements # 16- # 20:

" # 16, students already do this " (miss school for vacations)

" families will continue to take vacations according to the parents' work schedules and not children's school schedules"

" the important issue is providing staffs with the time and resources necessary for genuine change "

" # 17, no change from what is happening now " (burn out)

" perhaps summer type sports could be added, golf, tennis, swimming, etc."

" there is nothing I have seen about year-round schooling which would cause these (the statements) to happen- is possible under the current system"

" # 16, only if tolerated by schools " (miss school for vacations)

CHAPTER V

Summary and Discussion

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were two-fold; (1), to determine the benefits and the drawbacks of changing the traditional school calendar, and (2), to access current attitudes of selected secondary school administrators on matters pertaining to changing the traditional school calendar.

Literature Synopsis

A review of literature relating to year-round calender revealed several recurring themes.

The literature cited in Chapter II indicated few if any instructional reasons for operating under the traditional school calender (TSC). Supporting the adoption of the year-round calender (YRC), (Gitlin, 1992) cited a University of Southern California study showing an increase in student achievement of students attending schools operating under the YRC when

compared to students attending schools operating under the TSC. Ballinger (1987) stated that the YRC has proven itself instructionally. He contends that there is much time wasted under the TSC in reviewing material after a long summer break. Ballinger believes the need for an extensive review in September takes its toll on the achievement outcomes of most students.

Additionally, many of the studies and articles cited indicated that schools operating under the YRC are primarily located in the western part of the United States, with a vast majority of these being located in the state of California. (Brekke, 1990), (Gitlin, 1988), (Christie, 1989), and (Ballinger, 1987) have all studied schools in California operating under the YRC.

Many articles give one frequently occurring reason why many schools have switched from the TSC to the YRC. As indicated above, the most prolific growth in the YRC movement has occurred in California. The reason most schools give for the switch is a need to accommodate more students. Gitlin (1988) found that most year-round programs were originally adopted to reduce overcrowding. Zykowski (1991) found that school districts experimented with modifications for three reasons: 1) to implement new curriculum, 2) to house more students, 3) and to save money.

It should be noted that a majority of information available on the YRC reflects on these schools in a positive way. And despite the fact that few schools have changed to the YRC solely to increase student achievement, many are now considering this outcome as a primary reason for change (Gitlin, 1988). Although research on the YRC is still developing, there seems to be sufficient reason to suggest that the concept does have merit and is worth an in depth investigation (Zykowski, 1991).

Rational for the Study

American schools have come under increased scrutiny during the past decade. Today more than ever, Government reports such as Nation at Risk and Prisoners of Time, have put state and local districts under increased pressure to perform. Schools are being asked to fill the void left as family, community, and religious influences steadily lose ground in the upbringing of our children. Many argue that schools operating under the century old traditional school calendar cannot effectively accomplish all they are asked to do with today's students.

Schools on the Eastern Shore of Maryland face many of the same problems experienced by schools around the country.

Many Eastern Shore school districts are piloting or planning to restructure their schools, i.e. outcomes based education, site-based management, schools within schools, or four period school days.

Thus the rationale for this study is to determine whether or not studying the year-round calendar may be a viable option for schools on the Eastern Shore to consider as they investigate avenues for change.

The Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit opinions of secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland on topics related to learning and the year-round school. These opinions were grouped on four (4) categories: 1) beliefs about learning and instruction, 2) beliefs concerning extending the school year and providing instruction during the summer months, 3) beliefs about increasing the number of student days per year, 4) beliefs if the school calendar would include several smaller breaks instead of one large break.

Respondents indicated their opinions on different statements according to a five point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from " strongly agree" to " strongly disagree."

Findings

In this section the findings based on the responses to statements in the questionnaire are presented.

On the following survey statements, a **majority** of respondents believe:

*(**Bold** = positive indicators as related to the YRC,*

the YRC would be beneficial to students)

The percentage agreeing with each statement is indicated

1. **Student retention is affected by breaks in instruction. 78 %**
2. **Slower students forget at a faster rate than brighter students. 68 %**
4. **Traditional schools waste time on the review of old material. 70%**

The above statements relate to attitudes concerning learning and instruction. From the high number of ' agree ' responses the weaknesses of the traditional school calendar are evident when compared with the way people learn and retain information.

On the following survey statements, a **majority** of the respondents believe:

*(**Bold** = positive indicators as related to the YRC,*

the YRC would be beneficial to students)

The percentage agreeing with each statement is indicated

6. Alternative calendars allow more flexible scheduling. 53 %

7. Alternative calenders create problems with extra-curricular activities. 71 %

8. Alternative calendars provide better use of facilities. 77 %

9. Alternative calendars offer extra remedial classes. 58 %

10. Students learn best when instruction is continual. 58 %

The above statements are in the context of extending the school year and providing instruction in the summer. Large percentages of the respondents support statements that are supportive of year-round learning. However many respondents believe that extra-curricular activities would suffer.

On the following survey statements, a **majority** of the respondents believe:

*(**Bold** = positive indicators as related to the YRC,*

the YRC would be beneficial to students)

The percentage agreeing with each statement is indicated

16. Students will miss school because of vacations. 64 %
18. Smaller more frequent breaks will interfere with extra-curricular activities. 61 %
20. **Smaller and more frequent breaks will not create too many interruptions of learning. 56 %**

The above statements are in response to the posibility of including several smaller breaks instead of one large summer break. The only positive statement as it relates to the year-round calendar is an instructional/ learning item. The responses that do not reflect positively on year-round schooling are both nonacademic items.

On the following survey statements, data indicate **no majority** response to each statement, the mean values are close to (3.0) or no opinion:

3. Year-round students will do no better than traditional students on standardized test.

Mean = 2.8

Median = 3.0

14. Increasing the number of student days will increase the dropout rate.

Mean = 2.9

Median = 3.0

15. Increasing the number of student days will improve student retention.

Mean = 2.8

Median = 3.0

17. Smaller and more frequent breaks will lead to less student and teacher burn out.

Mean = 2.9

Median = 3.0

19. Smaller and more frequent breaks will produce better student retention.

Mean = 2.8

Median = 3

<u>On the following survey statement, data indicate that a majority of the respondents **do not** believe:</u>

13. Increasing the number of student days per year will help schools meet MSPAP attendance requirements. 50 %

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has shown that year-round schooling is taking place around the country and that secondary school administrators on the Eastern Shore of Maryland supported many of the outcomes that a year-round calendar may produce, particularly outcomes related to instructional areas. This study has also shown that there are some actual and perceived problems in implementing year-round schools particularly in the extra-curricular and nonacademic areas.

Additional research is also needed. This study examined only administrator attitudes towards year-round school. It would also be useful to investigate the attitudes and opinions of others who may be affected by year-round schooling. Certainly examining the attitudes of students, parents, teachers, school boards, community groups, and businesses would yield pertinent information on this topic. The education of children involves all of these areas, thus their opinions and attitudes toward year-round schooling would be an important factor in considering this change.

If year-round schooling is to be implemented it would be

best implemented on a large scale to minimize problems associated with extra-curricular activities making additional regional and state-wide studies necessary.

Changing the traditional school calendar is not something to be taken lightly. The traditional school calendar is ingrained in the way society functions and lives. Restructuring the traditional school calendar will require changing the way American society has been structured for many years, it will require changing the American way of life as most of us know it today.

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Appendix A

SOURCES FOR YEAR-ROUND SURVEYS AND NATIONAL INFORMATION

The National Association for Year-Round Education

P.O.Box 711383

San Diego, CA 92171-1386

SURVEYS USED IN FORMULATING QUESTIONS USED IN THIS STUDY

The Office of Planning, Research, and Development. (1992). College Park Elementary School Year-Round School Evaluation. Atlanta, GA: Russell, Connie

Chula Vista Elementary School District. (1992). Evaluation Report of Mueller Multi-Track Program. Collins, Bill

The Center for Business and Economic Research. (1991). Year-Round Schools: Issues and Concerns of Clark County Residents. Las Vegas, NV: Schwer, K.R. and Baneshvary, R.

Appendix B

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY
COVER LETTER

This survey is being conducted as part of a Master's Thesis at Salisbury State University. Information from this survey will be used to better understand opinions about year-round school schedules as they relate to academic achievement of students on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Survey findings will be sent to all interested respondents in June of 1994.

Information and responses will be kept confidential and will not be identified by name, school, or school district.

Please answer all 20 questions. If you wish to comment on any question or to further qualify your answer, feel free to write in the margins or in the space provided on each page.

Please return survey by March 18, 1994.

Thank you for your help.

Researcher: Mr. Daryl Silsley
Graduate Student
Salisbury State University

Advisor: Dr. Doran Christensen
Dean of Education
Salisbury State University
Salisbury, MD 21801-6837

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 1

Year-Round Survey

Administrator Profile:

		High	Middle
A. Position:	Principal		
	Vice Principal		

B. Years in education: 0-15 16-20 21-25 26-30 30+

C. Years in school district: 0-5 5-10 10-20 20-30 30+

D. ☐ Male ☐ Female

E. ☐ 10 mo. employee ☐ 12 mo. employee

F. Please check the box that best describes your familiarity with year-round school.

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat Familiar

☐ Not Familiar at all

E. Have you visited a year-round school?

☐ yes ☐ no

F. If no, would you like to?

☐ yes ☐ no

G. Do you believe that your school will meet MSPAP standards for the 1993-1994 school year?

☐ yes ☐ no

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 2

Instructions: Circle one response to each statement.

KEY

SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree
N = No Opinion
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

Beliefs about learning and instruction:

1. Student retention is affected by breaks in instruction.

SA A N D SD

2. Slower students forget information at a faster rate than brighter students.

SA A N D SD

3. Students who go to school year-round will do no better than traditional students on standardized test.

SA A N D SD

4. There is little time wasted in traditional schools on the review of old material.

SA A N D SD

5. A students' best models for speech, vocabulary, and behavior exist at home.

SA A N D SD

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 3

Beliefs on extending the school year and providing instruction during the summer months:

6. Allows for more flexible scheduling.

SA A N D SD

7. Creates problems with extra-curricular activities.

SA A N D SD

8. Provides better use of facilities.

SA A N D SD

9. Offers extra remedial classes.

SA A N D SD

10. Students learn best when instruction is given continuously throughout the entire year.

SA A N D SD

comments:

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 4

Beliefs about increasing the number of student attendance days per year:

11. Makes better use of facilities.

SA A N D SD

12. Students and teachers burn out

SA A N D SD

13. Schools will meet MSPAP attendance requirements.

SA A N D SD

14. Dropout rate will increase.

SA A N D SD

15. Better student retention.

SA A N D SD

comments:

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 5

Beliefs if the new school calender would include several smaller breaks instead of one large break:

16. Students will miss school because of family vacations.

SA A N D SD

17. Less student and teacher burn out.

SA A N D SD

18. Interferes with extra-curricular activities.

SA A N D SD

19. Produces better student retention.

SA A N D SD

20. Creates to many interruptions of learning.

SA A N D SD

comments:

Check here if you wish to receive a summary of this survey. ☐

Appendix B continued

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY

PAGE # 6

Additional Thoughts or Remarks:

Appendix B continued
YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL SURVEY
PAGE # 7

Please fold
the facing page
to the front page and
staple. Postage is
prepaid.

Thank you again
for your time
and input.

Appendix C

Additional Written Comments Received from Surveys

" Another variable in answering the survey depends on the magnitude of change, is this one school system or a state-wide change? "

" more time receiving bad instruction will only add to the frustration level of the students "

" teachers forced to spend more time with students who come from disfunctional homes, have low self-esteem, lack of values, and a dislike for rules and regulations will only force good teachers to look for other employment "

" to improve attendance and achievement parents must have positive attitudes about these two areas "

" I think schools and government most join together to restructure families that are falling apart. If the family unit is not working, kids need to be pulled out and placed in a positive environment, currently the system waits to long "

" to implement year-round schooling will require extensive staff development...leadership must " buy-in " at every level "

" If teachers work 240 days rather than 186 days will they receive a per diem rate for this time ? "

Appendix C continued

Additional Written Comments Received from Surveys

" Academically it is hard to ague against year-round school. But in practice it will not be nearly as successful as possible if parents and community are not supportive of it in addition to teachers."

" I am 100 % against year-round schools as a parent and as an educator."

" extending the school year without addressing social and economic issues and bad teaching will not improve test scores, student attendance, or anything else"