Calendar Survey and Feedback Analysis – June 2017

Through a joint message, Bellingham Public Schools and the Bellingham Education Association sought feedback on future school year calendars. Scenarios of a retro, current and a year-round or balanced calendar were shared. This video also explained how a school year calendar is developed. An email was sent to staff, families and community members on May 30. The same message was posted on the district website and shared via social media. A blog related to the calendar was also posted and a survey was shared for feedback. The survey opened on May 30 and closed at noon on June 6.

Respondents:

A total of 2,047 respondents took the survey. The majority were parents/guardians (63%).

1. Parent/Guardian – 1257
2. Certificated Staff – 344
3. Student – 160
4. Classified Staff – 113
5. Community Member – 107
6. Leader/Administrator – 31

All schools were represented in the responses, some more than others.

Our survey system grabs key words from each open-ended question to make a collage of the most common words represented in the comments.
Survey Questions:

Respondents were asked, “Do you think we should consider a balanced or year-round calendar?” Of the 2,013 people who responded to this question, 950 (47.19%) answered “no,” 800 (39.74%) answered “yes,” and 263 (13.07%) answered that they were “unsure.”

Comments:

943 comments were left regarding the year-round or balanced calendar.
Respondents were asked, “Is it important to you that school begin after Labor Day?” Of the 2,011 responses, 935 (46.49%) answered “yes,” 805 (40.03%) answered “no,” and 271 (13.48%) answered that they were unsure.
Respondents were asked, “Previous school year calendars had many more early dismissals, less than 180 school days, shorter school days and relied on more substitute teachers to provide staff learning time. Are you more supportive of returning to this type of calendar or of our current Staff Learning Days (Purple Fridays)?” Of the 1,981 responses, 1,085 (54.77%) answered “yes,” 500 (25.24%) answered “no,” and 396 (19.99%) answered that they were unsure.
Respondents were asked, “After reviewing the calendar scenarios, what do you like?”

Respondents were asked, “What do you dislike?”
Respondents were asked, “What other feedback do you have?”