

EDUCATION

KM Schools working on 2004-05 calendar

By **RONNIE WILSON**

For many years our school calendar has been designed with a strong instructional emphasis. Even though the calendar is governed by state laws and State Board of Education regulations, local school systems have some flexibility in calendar development. For example, our Board of Education feels that beginning school on a Monday sets the tone and conveys the message that every one of the 180 student days is important. Completing 90 instruction days and high school exams/end of course tests before Christmas has also been a top priority. If student days are missed due to inclement weather, we make sure makeup days are scheduled before our end of year testing period begins. Typically, we end the school year on a Friday with graduation that night. All of these decisions are based on a desire to create the best teaching/learning situation for our students and staff.

Briefly, let's take a look at the composition of a school calendar. A school calendar must be composed of 220 days. The days are to be distributed as follows:

- A minimum one 180 instructional days for students and a minimum of 1,000 hours of instruction covering at least nine calendar months. Instructional days for students may vary in length as long as there are at least 1,000 hours of instruction scheduled. Instructional days may be scheduled on any day except Sunday.
- Twenty non-instructional workdays for teachers. The number of non-instructional workdays will be reduced if the Board of Education or the principal in consultation with the School Improvement Team increases the number of instructional days for students by converting non-instructional teacher workdays to student days. The total number of instructional and non-instructional workdays will be 200, unless Christmas falls on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, when the total will be 199.
- Ten annual vacation leave days. The first 10 days of annual vacation leave earned by 10 month employees will be scheduled in the calendar by the Board.

These days must be taken as scheduled by 10 month employees.

Ten paid holidays, unless Christmas falls on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, when there will be 11 paid holidays and one less teacher workday. All holidays are scheduled by the Board with the exception that Veteran's Day must be a holiday for students.

The Board must develop a plan for making up lost days due to inclement weather. It has been our practice to schedule five make-up days prior to the end of the year testing in May. These make-up days are normally scheduled on discretionary teacher workdays in February and March as well as annual vacation leave days scheduled at Easter break in March or April. This ensures the maximum instructional opportunities for student success on their end-of-grade or end-of-course test.

The Kings Mountain District Schools Board of Education is seeking parent and community input in the development of their 2004-05 school year calendar. Anyone who wishes to offer suggestions or comments may do so by calling Ronnie Wilson at 734-5637 ext. 117 or writing to him at 105 East Ridge Street. It is anticipated that the Board will adopt a calendar at their March meeting. The design of the

calendar is directed to a large degree by North Carolina General Statutes at the State Board of Education policies.

- Calendar draft:
- Aug. 5-6 - Mandatory workdays.
 - Aug. 9 - First day for students.
 - Sept. 6 - Labor Day.
 - Oct. 11 - End first 9 weeks.
 - Oct. 15 - Mandatory workday for elementary/intermediate; discretionary for middle/high.
 - Nov. 11 - Annual leave - Veterans Day.
 - Nov. 25-26 - Thanksgiving.
 - Dec. 17 - End second 9 weeks and first semester.
 - Dec. 20-31 - Christmas and annual leave.
 - Jan. 3 - Mandatory workday for middle/high; discretionary for elementary/intermediate.
 - Jan. 17 - Martin Luther King holiday.
 - Feb. 17-18 - Discretionary workdays.
 - March 10 - End third 9 weeks.
 - March 11 - Mandatory workday.
 - March 28-Apr. 1 - Easter holiday and annual leave.
 - May 20 - End fourth 9 weeks - last day for students.
 - May 23 - Mandatory workday.

(Ronnie Wilson is assistant superintendent of Kings Mountain District Schools).

Students, educators don't like making up snow days

By **DANIEL RUFF**
KMHS Hookup Staff

With the recent snow and ice storms school had to cancel classes for four days.

Students and educators do not like the idea of losing scheduled days off and a day of spring break.

Principal John Yarbrow said, "North Carolina state law requires that schools have class for 180 days. This means we have to make up any missed school days. I hope the students realize that it is the state that requires making up missed school days, not me."

Sophomore Lindsey Newton commented, "People already have planned vacations for spring break. Now some will have to make different arrange-

ments so they won't miss school."

Jennifer Roseboro, also a sophomore, added, "I am not the least bit happy about the school make-up day schedule. They schedule make-up days on days where we might miss school again because of bad weather."

April Wright, a junior, has mixed feelings about the subject. "In a way, I am glad we got a snow day since we don't get snow here very often," she said. "The part I do not like about snow days is that it messes up our time to relax right before we start really studying for our exams."

Teachers dislike snow days as much as students.

Drama teacher Betsy Wells recalled past memories of

snow days. "I have always loved playing in the snow, but the worst part is having to make up the missed days."

Mercedes Humphries, a science teacher, said she dislikes the idea of making up days on teacher workdays. "That is the time I need to catch up on work that I have put off because of school. Students also need time off since they have extra-curricular activities, jobs, and homework to take care of on a daily basis."

Makeup days are Thursday, Feb. 20; Friday, Feb. 21; Thursday, March 13; and Monday, April 14.

If school is cancelled again, class will be made up on Friday, March 14.



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KM Class of '73 planning reunion

The Kings Mountain High School Class of 1973 is planning a 30th year reunion May 10 at Deer Brook Golf club with deadline for reservations March 15.

Contact Avis Morrow at 704-739-6363.

DeWitt Youngblood, Jr.



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