



Academic Calendars & School Start/End Times
2017/18 School Year

FAQs for Students & Families

What has changed about the Academic Calendars?

Where once there were *four* Academic Calendars to keep track of, now there is one, easy-to-read consolidated calendar. Regardless of what school your child attends, you will know what days they are expected at school, which days they have off and which days they will be released early.

Why did the start/end times change at the schools?

Increasing student success and achievement drove the decision to change school start/end times. School leaders were presented with compelling research data that showed overwhelming evidence these times would positively impact student attendance and achievement across many areas for the better. Leaders reviewed student attendance and performance data at Salt River Schools and worked diligently with the Transportation Department to ensure as little disruption to bus routes as possible. In addition, leaders carefully considered family and Community needs and survey feedback regarding time changes before making these changes.

What benefits will my student see with these changes?

There are many benefits to students and families with regards to these changes. The following links are among many that provide evidence to support the time changes we made at Salt River Schools:

- "Later School Start Times Promote Adolescent Well-Being," from the American Psychological Association (2014). More at <https://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/school-start-times.pdf>.
- "It's About Time (and Sleep): Making the Case for Starting School Later," from Education World (2017). More at http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin314.shtml.
- "Later high school start times linked to higher attendance, graduation rates," from Reuters (2017). More at <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-teens-education-idUSKBN15P2F7>.

Additionally, these changes help to create consistent, system-wide practices at Salt River Schools. Whether your child attends the any of the four schools, the new Academic Calendar and school start/end times fit seamlessly together.

Can you tell me more about Early Release and its purpose?

Early Release days are now consistent across the Division: The second and fourth Friday of every month school is in session (some exceptions apply during months with holidays and breaks falling on those days). Early Release days are required for staff and teachers to participate in important professional development, including training, best practices and academic planning, as research shows the best approach to professional development is job-embedded. The number of Early Release days in the upcoming school year are consistent with the number of Early Release days in prior years.

- - -

About these decisions: A committee made up of representatives from every school and many departments participated over the course of several months, beginning in January, to develop these changes to the Academic Calendar and collect feedback about changing the start/end times at schools. Prior to making any final decisions, the committee requested feedback via survey from Salt River Schools' stakeholders, including students, families and Community members. The survey was open for about two weeks and was distributed via our One Call Now messaging system, as well as administered to interested parents/Community members on-site at all school sites. Nearly 200 people took the surveys and a vast majority of participants indicated a desire to make the changes presented here.