

# A Late-August/Early-September, Uniform School Start Date

## Makes Fiscal and Educational Sense

### Cost Savings for School Districts

Research shows that it costs more to cool our schools in July and August than any other month. Starting school in early-August costs districts more money and takes limited tax dollars out of our classrooms. As we experience an economic downturn, many school districts are cutting teaching positions and field trips as a way to save money. Shouldn't we implement a fiscally responsible school calendar before cutting teaching positions and educational opportunities? After all, calendars don't teach children, teachers do!

### Increase in State Tax Collections

Research and past experience show the later the school-start date, the greater the attendance for travel and tourism attractions – meaning an increase in state tax collections. For example, a 2007 Florida Attractions Association Survey showed a 21 percent increase in attendance the first year the state enjoyed a required school start date of no earlier than 14 days before Labor Day. Greater business success means greater tax collections and more money available to better fund public education.

### States With Uniform School Start Dates Continue To Soar Academically

Texas, Florida and South Carolina recently enacted uniform school-start date laws. According to news releases, standardized test scores rose in each state and Texas and South Carolina saw increases on ACT scores while Florida saw an increase in SAT scores.

### Compliance with New Federal Education Regulations

Currently, Adequate Yearly Progress Reports, the report that tells parents how local schools are doing and allows students to transfer to better performing schools, must be issued no later than the first day of the school year. State departments of education are issuing the reports as quickly as possible. New regulations require these reports to be available to parents at least 14 days before the start of the 2010-2011 school year. The ever-earlier school start date has a many schools beginning the day the report is issued, meaning without a change in school start dates the state could be non-compliant with federal education law and could face financial fines.

### School Districts Retain Control of School Holidays, Vacation Days, Teacher Work Days, Professional Development Scheduling and Semester End Dates

This legislation will only set a date by which schools may begin no earlier. School districts are welcome to start later, should the school board desire. All other calendar decisions are left to the vote of the school board.

### For More Information Contact:

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