This presentation describes the year-round school operation of the Chula Vista City School District in California. Chula Vista adopted the 45-15 year-round plan to help ease a shortage of classroom space while maintaining a quality program for children. Under the plan, each pupil attends school for about nine weeks and then has vacation for three weeks. Throughout the year, one-fourth of the pupils are on vacation at any time. Major advantages of the year-round program are that the long summer vacation is redistributed into shorter seasonal vacations, the school facility is in use 12 months a year, variations in teacher contracts are possible, and most of the benefits of the traditional school program are retained. Disadvantages include the break in the tradition of a long summer holiday, difficulties in scheduling and communication, more expensive maintenance, and the need to study and consider vacation programs throughout the entire year. The document also considers answers to questions often asked about implementation of a year-round school program. The 1974-75 year-round school calendar for each student group is included. (Author/DN)
YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL

Imagine that you are standing on a hill covered by sagebrush. The panorama of virgin land extends to the foot of the hill and abruptly becomes flat land, a mesa, with a multitude of new houses. This is where it happened! This is the area of our district where pupil population outgrew school capacity. Developers and contractors kept constructing houses, covering jack rabbit burrows, laying asphalt and cement. Six years ago, fewer than 400 pupils attended the one elementary school on the mesa. In 1968, 1970, and again in 1971, additional schools were needed—and built. But the people kept coming. We realized that school construction could no longer keep pace with the population. Soon there would be 4,000 elementary school children—enough to fill five schools under the regular program. What could we do? Or, better yet, what did we do?

We changed to the year-round school! In July 1971 the four schools on the mesa opened their doors upon a new year, a new experience. Without crowding, without half-day sessions, without bussing out of the area, without diluting the educational program, the four schools enrolled almost 4,000 pupils. Schools designed for 750 pupils began housing 1,000. Thus four schools began doing the work of five!

If we could turn the calendar back and decide again—knowing what we now know about year-round school—would we make the same decision? Would we begin the year-round program? The answer is an emphatic "YES." After nearly three years' experience, we know that pupil, staff, and community reactions are good! Nothing would change our minds if we had it to do over again. We think that year-round school is right—educationally and financially.

* National Association of Elementary School Principals National Convention, held April 27 - May 2, 1974 in Anaheim, California.
Let's step back a moment and get another perspective. We have been talking about four schools in the Chula Vista City School District. In all, we have a responsibility for the education--kindergarten through grade six--of almost 17,000 pupils in 26 elementary schools. Our assessed valuation is below the state average. We are not on the state building aid program but are close. School bond elections have passed, but the 5% bond limit had been reached.

Other districts may be studying the year-round school concept because they have to replace pre-Field Act buildings, are unable to pass bonds, are on half-day sessions, wish to make better use of existing facilities, or ideally--they are searching for ways to improve the educational program. Chula Vista studied and searched to find a solution to lack of classroom space and a way to maintain a quality program for children. We found it in year-round school.

What do we mean when we say "year-round school"? We mean that each pupil attends school for about nine weeks or about 45 days and then has vacation for three weeks or 15 days. Throughout the year, one-fourth of the pupils are on vacation; three-fourths are in school. Each child attends at least the State required minimum number of days. Our year-round school is therefore a mandatory, rotating, year-round program. It is not an extended year program which adds days beyond the minimum for each child. This mandated schedule offers full utilization of buildings and materials.

Across the country, there is growing interest in the year-round school. Interest is now so widespread that no board, no administration, no staff can afford to dismiss the idea without considering its purposes and pros and cons. Variations on the year-round school have existed for sixty years; recently the plan has grown in momentum. Schools in St. Charles, Missouri, and Valley View, Illinois, spurred new interest with their versions which divided the long summer vacation into shorter vacations throughout
the year. Newspapers, magazines, books, and television programs are explaining the concept in terms the public can understand—and the public is listening.

Educators are seeking first-hand experience from districts that have programs underway. Letters, visits, and meetings help answer questions, but there is no one model for year-round school. Each district is different and must modify any plan according to specific needs.

You may be interested in more details of the year-round program—you may be in a district just starting the program, or one that soon will, so let's focus on specifics.

First, what are the advantages of the year-round program? It retains all the benefits and services of the traditional school program. For example, in addition to the regular instruction, special classes continue to be offered children who have learning problems, speech or hearing difficulties; special interest in instrumental or choral music; and those who need additional help in language development or reading. School continues to offer a full day program—rather than a half-day session. There is a possibility for even better education since a changed calendar encourages an intensive look at every aspect of school. Year-round school seems to be hastening the study and acceptance of individualized and personalized instruction as well as ungraded or multi-graded classes.

Another advantage is that the long summer vacation is redistributed, divided into shorter seasonal vacations. This gives families opportunities to take trips at any or each season. National parks and resort areas can be better utilized. Businesses will not have to crowd all employee vacations into the summer months. Since vacations are shorter, children will be less bored. They will have less time to forget learnings before continuing the school cycle. Retention should be better. There would be no need to spend weeks in the Fall reteaching previous work. Time saved could be spent on new work.
The year-round school brings full utilization of the school facility during twelve months. Books and equipment may have such extensive use that they may be worn out about the time they become outdated. Three classrooms will do the work of four, because one group of pupils is on vacation at any given time. Without crowding, the school accommodates more pupils. This plan gives an opportunity to save millions of dollars in new buildings; three buildings will do the job of four.

An advantage for teachers is that the year-round school offers variations in contracts--either shorter or longer than the traditional school year. With the opportunity to increase their economic status, teachers need not take summer jobs.

What are the disadvantages of year-round school? The major disadvantage seems to be the break in tradition that violates the "sanctity" of the American summer vacation. Some families are keyed to extensive summer holidays. Scheduling and communication are more difficult and time consuming. People must continue to be informed about the program. Each message must be repeated at least once, for a group is always on vacation. Schools in some areas might require air conditioning if plants are to be used during hot summer months. Maintenance could be more expensive if major jobs are to be done at night and on Saturdays. Summer vacation programs must be studied and considered for the entire year. This includes recreation programs, camping, and playground activities.

These disadvantages can be overcome through planning and action. Remember that saving money on the daily operation of the school is not an objective of the change in calendar. With the additional enrollment come additional funds, so per-pupil operational expenses should be about the same as expenses for the traditional calendar.

How can the year-round school be implemented with staff and community involvement and support? We first started discussing the year-round school with staff members
to get them familiar with the concept and to get feedback and support. We feel this is very important. We then asked and received board permission to talk with people in the community. The Homeowner’s Association was a natural channel for communication. They helped us set up a series of six meetings in the schools for parents and other citizens. At each meeting we gave people opportunity to ask questions and to vote—to tell how they felt about year-round school. We returned to the board with positive reactions. The board then authorized year-round school. At this time a continuing ad hoc citizen’s advisory committee was organized and has continued to work in a very helpful manner as liaison between the community and administration and Board and in making recommendations.

Communication is vital to keep the facts—not rumors, circulating. The district publishes a Year-Round School Lettergram to help keep the public informed. All notices to parents have been in English and Spanish. Through involvement, staff and community helped to implement the year-round school in our area.

What legislative changes were required? Through Senator Burgener and Assemblyman Deddeh, we were able to gain legislative action making the 45-15 plan possible. In early June, the “Continuous School Programs” Bill was approved. This happened a month before we put the program into operation. In July, 1973, the Vasconcellos Bill replaced the earlier one and made it possible for any district in California to adopt the year-round (45-15) program without having to get special permission from the State Superintendent. State Department officials are working as a team to help implement the program administratively and legislatively. They spent a day with us reviewing each aspect of the year-round school.

What is a practical time-line for putting the year-round school into operation? Valley View, a pioneer in year-round school, had 19 months’ lead time. They used
this time "to work out technicalities of scheduling, school census, air conditioning, curriculum adjustment, teacher negotiations," and secure legislative approval. In Chula Vista we began our study in January 1971 and the program in July 1971—six months later. Our time was probably too short, and new legislation requires more time, but faced with the threat of half-day sessions, and given the opportunity to have a full program, we were highly motivated to complete the groundwork in the brief time.

People have asked, "How do you develop a master calendar?" First, we listed legal regulations and decided upon district criteria or constraints.

- Have at least the state required minimum number of days per year (175)
- Have each section complete 175 days within the fiscal year to avoid apportionment confusion
- Have three sections in school every day school is operating
- Begin school weeks on Monday, end on Friday whenever possible
- Assure each section a three-week vacation during each season with the summer three weeks coming during summer vacation for the high school district.
- Have the regular holidays and at least three weeks of vacation including Christmas, Easter, and the Fourth of July for all children.

Next, a blank form was made for working on trial calendars. Two drafts which seemed to fulfill all of the requirements were presented to the staff and to the citizen's committee for discussion, refinement, and selection. The Board then approved the year-round school calendar selected.

A look at the September, 1974 calendar will assist one in seeing the section sequences more clearly. Section A is in school through September 27 and then begins a three-week vacation. Section B is in the middle of a nine-week cycle and attends all
weeks in September. Section C is on vacation and returns on September 10, while
Section D has only one week left and then goes on vacation for three weeks. You can
see that three of the four sections are in school at any time.

As the calendar was being designed, another question was before us. "How do
you decide boundaries?" We knew that the total K-6 population would be housed in the
four schools and that each school would have four sections. We worked out district
criteria related to school and section boundaries. These were:

- Equalize enrollment in schools considering each building's capacity
- Balance grade levels in each section
- Have a minimum of busing
- Schedule all children in any family in the same section
- Place neighborhoods in the same section
- Have racial and ethnic balance in schools and sections

Before deciding upon boundaries, we had to know the pupil populations—area of
residence, school placement, and other factors. While we decided to make a manual
count, a unified district which would have family members in various schools—elementary,
junior, and senior high schools, would probably need computer scheduling. At each
school a pin map was made on which boundaries between schools were located. After
all boundaries were located and sections approximately equal, children were listed
for each school by section. Note that similar sections such as A-A or B-B should be
located next to each other so that children would not need to change sections if
boundaries changed.

"How and when do you inform parents of their child's specific assignment section
and calendar?" We did this in May our first year, but we notified parents in December
each year after that. We think this gives parents sufficient time to plan family vaca-
tions that will coincide with the children's schedule. This is a copy of the 1974-75 calendar sent to parents of Section A children. An explanation accompanied the calendar. For additional details, parents were given a district published booklet on the year-round school.

What options did parents have? While our Citizens Committee discouraged change, it developed a list of acceptable reasons for children not to attend the year-round program. In our first year, forty requests were honored, but when the program began, only 22 children remained on the list of those who desired to be bussed to district schools not on the year-round program. Last year we had only eight requests, probably because of the earlier availability of the calendar.

Do children on vacation have an opportunity to participate in any activities at school? Yes, intersession is a summer school-type program which occurs in three-week cycles the year around. Children on vacation have the option of attending classes for the half-day program which is planned by certificated teachers assigned to intersession. Activities depend upon children’s interests and needs. Remedial and enrichment work are available, with the greatest emphasis on varied experiences.

A topic as important as calendar designing and boundary planning is staffing. A question asked often is: "Do certificated and classified personnel have a choice of whether or not to work in a year-round school?" In our program, the staff had a choice. However, all new employees are being hired with the understanding that they could be placed in a year-round school.

Once employed in a year-round school, do staff members have a choice of the number of days they will work? Secretaries, health clerks, and custodians are expected to be twelve-month employees. Some librarians and teachers of speech and
hearing, reading, and special education work the maximum number of days – 225.

Classroom teachers have an option of contracts running anywhere from 184 to 225 days, as long as we maintain a class load of approximately 30 children at any time.

Three plans were common:

1. Teachers are on the 45-15 cycle and are assigned to the same schedule as their pupils.

2. Teachers worked all 225 school days school was open. They were assigned approximately forty children – ten from each section. They had three sections (30 pupils) in class and one section (10 pupils) on vacation at any time.

3. A team of teachers in an open space school has various options. Space for six classes serves eight groups with eight teachers on the 45-15 cycle. The eight groups or 240 children may have 6, 7, or 8 teachers in the loft. The team and principal decide the number of teachers and divide the work/vacation periods.

Great flexibility is possible as long as the educational program retains the benefits and services for children.

Staffing is complex. We have many variations in year-round contracts for teachers. We have collected data on performance, health, and attitude related to length of contract and expect to know more about preferred types. Principals, who work 226 days, selected their vacation weeks according to an agreed upon plan. A fifth principal works in their building during such times. In all, the four school buildings have the equivalent of five school populations and thus equivalent staff support to serve a fifth school.
The effects of year-round school are extensive. Although the change is primarily a calendar change, there are implications for everything you do. For example:

- PTA memberships now run from October to October. We have changed to August to August.

- Insurance for students only available from September to September. We got policies from July to July.

- Choral practice for a program is complicated by one section being on vacation. We invite children to come back and practice.

- Equivalent State testing program dates

- New State texts need to be available by the end of June (Texts are issued on a 1:1 basis and we don’t need all of them with one fourth of students on vacation.)

- Obtaining school records from other districts during summer vacation months

Even the student council organization is affected. What do you do when the president is on vacation for three weeks? The children pictured here do not hold traditional student council jobs; they are vice-presidents from Sections A, C, and D. Vice-president of Section B, is on vacation, but she came back for the picture. The four vice-presidents fill in during the absence of the president.

The transition—the coming and going of groups of children in the 45-15 year-round program—is one of the most obvious changes in school life. For example, the group circled, Section B, is going on vacation for three weeks and another group will return from vacation. At any time, three of the four groups are in school. In an open space school, these children and teachers go on vacation—and these return to take the vacated area. In a self-contained classroom, this class is concluding nine weeks of school. As pupils finish work, they place spelling books and related items in a cart.
The custodian pushes the loaded cart to a storage area. On Monday, a new group moves into the room.

Meshing occurs when some of the people working together in a loft go on vacation and others return. As they leave, children are informed of possible vacation activities. Children who return complete their personal work contracts for the week and learn what happened at school and elsewhere during their vacation.

As far as a change in curriculum is concerned, by comparison modern math was a greater change than year-round school. This is true because the major change in this program is calendar not content. However--revitalization of the curriculum may result and we feel is resulting. Staffs are studying sequence of learning to determine which skills in the curriculum must be learned in order. Math and reading are becoming more and more individualized. Teachers and "older" children, who are tutors, may offer personalized help as needed.

Administrators of year-round school must consider the need for public information and public relations. Once scheduling and staffing have been worked out, the biggest job is communication. New families to the area must learn about the program, how it works, and how it affects them. The entire community is affected when the pattern of vacations change.

What happens to teacher inservice? When do teachers in year-round school have time for professional growth? The first year teachers had a week of preschool study before July 6. The second year they had three days. This year they have four days available for preschool study. The calendar change has not affected attendance at district sponsored college classes--from Great Books to Individualized Reading and Social Science teachers are participating--even during their vacation breaks. Inservice
meetings and workshops find willing year-round school participants who join teachers from throughout the district. There are some problems which must be solved in cooperation with local colleges. Intensive three-week courses could be offered throughout the year. Teachers on the all-year contract must have the option for evening or Saturday classes.

Year-round school will have an effect upon building design. In Valley View, Illinois, a new school, designed for the year-round program with the help of Educational Facilities Lab, is quite similar to our existing open space schools. In designing our next school, we are considering special storage areas for materials of vacationing teachers and pupils. We have found that vacationing pupils make use of the library and playground and, therefore, need easy access to these areas for storage of regular materials. We are already using tote trays and have carts for personal items.

These are only a few of the effects of year-round school. Changes may be even more pronounced for secondary schools.

One cannot predict all consequences of calendar change for schools nor the effects upon the community. Expansion of a year-round program to many areas may have far-reaching effects. Family vacationing in resort areas could occur at any season, and with year-round utilization of facilities, vacation costs should decrease. Parks should be less crowded. And what would happen to the traditional "back to school sales" in September? These would be scattered throughout the year.

What is the financial picture of year-round school? Let me give you an example. There is one area of our district which will develop in the next few years. Twelve new schools will be needed! But using the year-round calendar concept, nine schools can house all new pupils. A new school costs at least one million dollars for construction.
The bonding expense over a twenty-year period is an additional $1,000,000. Twelve new schools on the traditional calendar would cost taxpayers at least $24,000,000. With the year-round school program, nine new schools would do the work of twelve. This would save taxpayers $6,000,000. San Diego is ten times larger than Chula Vista. Expansion at the same rate and using the year-round school would save $60,000,000. Los Angeles is ten times the size of San Diego . . . Los Angeles could save $600,000,000. Therefore, year-round school has a potential for saving construction costs.

A grant was obtained from the Rosenberg Foundation to assist us in preparing a comprehensive evaluation of the first year of this program. The evaluation shows strong acceptance of YRS by school staffs, parents, and the children.

We can say that data collected showed (1) 17 out of 18 parents, after one year, felt YRS was academically better for their children, (2) 84% of the parents said their children liked YRS, (3) teachers said they felt YRS was good for children, (4) and teachers and principals liked the spaced vacations. Academic success is as good in YRS as in the traditional schools.

Our year-round school program has been in operation for three years now and we continue to be excited about its future. Three more schools in our district started year-round programs in 1973-74. Other schools are studying for possible implementation in the future. ---Yes, we are enthusiastic about the year-round program which provides better education and saves money. People involved in the year-round school like it.
ASSIGNMENT SECTION A
1974-75 SCHOOL YEAR ASSIGNMENT

Your child will be attending the same school as this year.

The first day of class is July 29, 1974.

School attendance days are indicated by the solid color.

Year-round intersession classes (summer school) are also noted on this calendar.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

In order to assist us in our planning, it would be helpful if you would register any children who are eligible to attend Kindergarten next July, 1974. Children may be registered at your school of assignment on Mondays through Fridays 9:00-12:00 or 1:00-3:00 beginning February 4, 1974. Children must be five years of age on or before December 2, 1974 and must have verification of birth and immunization against poliomyelitis, measles and DPT (diphtheria, pertussis [whooping cough] and tetanus).

*CVCSD/A600(3A)/1-74

*Refer to p.8

1974-75 YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL CALENDAR *

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January 7, 1974

Dear Parents:

We are pleased to be able to send you at this time the 1974-75 school calendar for your child. It is our hope that this early notification will help in planning your family vacations during the next school year.

From every indication received to date, parents, school staffs and students appear to be enthusiastic in their support for the year-round school program.

Feel free to contact your child's principal should you have any questions regarding this information. You will want to save this calendar for use during the coming school year.

Cordially,

Burton C. Tiffany
Superintendent
## ASSIGNMENT SECTION B
### 1974–75 SCHOOL YEAR ASSIGNMENT

Your child will be attending the same school as this year.

The first day of class is July 5, 1974.

School attendance days are indicated by the solid color.

Year-round intersession classes (summer school) are also noted on this calendar.

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

In order to assist us in our planning, it would be helpful if you would register any children who are eligible to attend Kindergarten next July, 1974. Children may be registered at your school of assignment on Mondays through Fridays 9:00–12:00 or 1:00–3:00 beginning February 4, 1974. Children must be five years of age on or before December 2, 1974 and must have verification of birth and immunization against poliomyelitis, measles and DPT (diphtheria, pertussis ('whooping cough') and tetanus).
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Cordially,

Burton C. Tiffany
Superintendent
ASSIGNMENT SECTION C
1974-75 SCHOOL YEAR ASSIGNMENT

Your child will be attending the same school as this year.

The first day of class is July 8, 1974.

School attendance days are indicated by the solid color.

Year-round intersession classes (summer school) are also noted on this calendar.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

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1974-75 YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL CALENDAR

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- INTERSESSION

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

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Cordially,

Burton C. Tiffany
Superintendent
ASSIGNMENT SECTION D
1974-75 SCHOOL YEAR ASSIGNMENT

Your child will be attending the same school as this year.

The first day of class is July 5, 1974.

School attendance days are indicated by the solid color.

Year-round intersession classes (summer school) are also noted on this calendar.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

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