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Year-Round School Calendars Versus Traditional School Calendars:  
Parents' and Teachers' Opinions

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A dissertation  
presented to  
the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis  
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Education

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by  
Jennifer Y. Rule  
December 2009

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Dr. Eric Glover, Chair  
Dr. Cecil Blankenship  
Dr. James Lampley  
Dr. Louise MacKay

Keywords: Student Achievement, Opinions, Traditional Schools, Year-Round Schools

## ABSTRACT

### Year-Round School Calendars Versus Traditional School Calendars: Parents' and Teachers' Opinions

by

Jennifer Y. Rule

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference of opinions of teachers and parents of students who attend year-round calendar schools from those of teachers and parents of students who attend traditional calendar schools. A random sampling was taken from teachers and parents from schools in both Blount and Sevier Counties. The surveys were given to teachers who worked in a traditional school setting, teachers who worked in the year-round school setting, parents who had children attending a traditional school, and parents who had children attending a year-round school. A 3-point scale was used on the survey to measure each question.

The findings from this study conclude that teachers and parents of students who attend year-round calendar schools tend to have more favorable opinions about their school setting as opposed to teachers and parents of students who attend traditional calendar schools. Parents' and teachers' perceptions were analyzed regarding academic performance, and opinions on school calendars.

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my many driving forces: my precious little girl (Keleigh Jo) who was born in midst of this journey, my devoted husband (Donnie Rule) who allowed me the time needed to complete this huge on taking, my parents (Carl and Sue Yoakum) who have always been my most loyal cheerleaders, and my brothers and sisters (Gina Guess, Sandy Sessions, David Yoakum, Larry Yoakum, and Steve Yoakum) who have always had confidence in me (their baby sister) completing this degree.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Year-round schooling might seem like a novel idea; however, it has actually been around for quite some time. Schools in Baltimore and New York have participated in year-round education since the early 1900s (White, 1995). The traditional school calendar was developed for the agrarian culture of long ago. Because we are no longer bound to agrarian calendars, many educators now suspect that rearranging the school year could increase opportunities for better student achievement (White). The year-round school calendar has become an increasingly popular alternative to the traditional 9-month school calendar. According to Kneese (2000), the National Association for Year-Round Education reported that in 1999 over two million students were enrolled in more than 2,900 year-round schools in 43 states; this was a five-fold increase within the 1990s. The vast majority of these schools were in California and Texas (Morison, 2002).

The phrase "year-round schooling" is actually a misnomer. Students in year-round schools do not stay in school all year. In most cases, they are in school the same number of days as are students on traditional calendars. Rather than a 3-month vacation, their schedules include several shorter vacations, or intersessions, spaced throughout the year (Chaika, 1999). Most states require students to attend school for 180 days. Year-round schooling offers two options: single track and multi track. This study concentrated on the single track year-round schools because of their prevalence in East Tennessee.

Single track year-round schools offer students the opportunity to engage in year-round learning while having shorter breaks in lieu of long extended summer vacations. This modified

calendar has many short breaks and does not extend the actual time spent in the classroom. Students who were exposed to these modified school calendars appeared to have a chance to improve their learning. Intersession classes offered during the 3-week break provided quality activities and afforded remedial classes to help lower-achieving students. The remedial classes were provided every 9 weeks to help students who needed necessary improvement on skills. Traditional schools have been popular since the early years because they were designed to meet the needs of families of agricultural communities. Traditional school calendars were developed for students to attend for 5 to 6 months, allowing them to be free to work in the farming community. In today's society, however, the majority of the population has become more urbanized. Nevertheless, the educational system has continued to be set up based on the traditional calendar (Cooper, Valentine, Charlton, & Melson, 2003).

The traditional school calendar can sometimes hinder students' learning abilities because of the 3-month summer vacation. Many students experience some type of learning loss during the summer vacation, but the lower-performing students have shown a wider gap in loss of skills. There was also a large gap of learning found among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds (Cooper et al., 2003). Children need to be involved continually in some type of learning throughout the year (Weaver, 1992a). Because of the 3-month vacation period in traditional schools, there has often been a halt in the learning process of students. Year-round schooling has also allowed students to participate in extended programs such as remedial courses for those who are behind academically as well as enrichment programs for those students who are above grade-level.

The experience of teachers in year-round schools and traditional schools has been found to be different in many aspects. Teachers who work in year-round schools have had positive

experiences because of flexible work schedules, a reduction in stress, and time provided for professional reflection (Haser & Nasser, 2003). Experiences of teachers in traditional schools have been found positive in many aspects as well. Teachers in traditional schools have the opportunity to further their education, spend quality time with their families, and get second jobs (Haser & Nasser). Both types of schools promote teacher motivation and instructional effectiveness.

According to the National Association for Year-Round Education (NAYRE) (2007), there are approximately 66 year-round schools in Tennessee. Of those 66 schools, approximately 11 are in East Tennessee. Of those 11 schools, only 6 are elementary schools. This study focused on the two single-track year-round elementary schools in East Tennessee and two traditional calendar schools in East Tennessee.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

The main focus of this study was to determine if there was a difference in teachers' and parents' opinions between single track year-round calendar schooling and traditional calendar schooling. It has been argued that low-performing students who attend year-round schools have more time to master necessary skills. These students might get extra help during the intersession classes so they do not have to feel frustrated all year (McMillen, 2001). The low-performing students who attended traditional schools did not have the same opportunities. The long summer break interfered with the retention of knowledge learned throughout the previous school year. Some of these students attended summer school to help learn the material they were behind on during the school year (Warrick-Harris, 1995).

A second focus of this study was to analyze and gain understanding of the experiences of teachers who teach in both types of schools. According to Shields and Oberg (2000b), teachers who are employed in traditional schools experience job stress and burnout after the first few months of school. Teachers who work in year-round schools do not appear to feel the same type of job stress and burnout; these teachers feel more motivated and enthusiastic (Shields & Oberg, 2000b).

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference of opinions of teachers and parents of students who attend year-round calendar schools from those of teachers and parents of students who attend traditional calendar schools. Parent's and teachers' perceptions were analyzed regarding academic performance, and opinions about school calendars.

### *Research Questions*

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Are there differences in parents' or teachers' combined perspectives of academic performances in a year-round school as opposed to a traditional school?
2. Is there a difference in opinion about teaching and learning for teachers and parents of children who participate in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?
3. Is there a difference in teachers' or parents' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school?
4. Is there a difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional schools?

### *Limitations and Delimitations*

The participants in this study were teachers and parents of students in four East Tennessee elementary schools. The limited number of teachers and parents who were surveyed could skew the results.

### *Operational Definitions*

1. *Traditional School Calendar*: This type of school calendar requires students to attend school 180 days. This calendar is a 9-month calendar with schools closed for 3 months during the summer (Ballinger, 1987).
2. *Year-Round School*: This type of school schedule requires students to attend school 180 days; however, these days are arranged differently. The year-round calendar shortens the summer break and lengthens other breaks throughout the year. Year-round schools have two main tracks: single track and multi track (Kneese, 1996).
3. *Single Track*: All students attend school at the same time. This type of calendar is the most popular type of year-round school. Usually, students attend school for 45 days and have a 15-day break (Kneese, 1996).
4. *Multi Track*: This type of calendar allows more students to attend the same school at different sessions when overcrowding is a problem. Multi-track calendars often consist of four different schedules (Kneese, 1996).
5. *Intersession*: This is a break where students have the opportunity to attend remedial or enrichment classes provided by the school. Intersessions commonly are for 3-week periods (Ballinger, 1998).

6. *Remedial Classes*: These classes are offered to help low-performing students improve academic skills (Ballinger, 1998).
7. *Enrichment Classes*: These classes are offered to enrich and accelerate high-performing students (Ballinger, 1995).

### *Participants*

The participants were classroom teachers who taught in schools with a traditional school calendar as well as those who taught in schools with a year-round calendar. Based upon location, teachers were chosen from schools in both Blount and Sevier Counties. Teachers at the participating schools were asked to complete a survey. Randomly selected parents from each type of school were also asked to complete a survey.

### *Research Design*

The research was of a quantitative nature. The research consisted of analyzing each of the schools' teacher and parent responses to the survey. The researcher developed a survey using a written questionnaire format. Responses to these questions helped develop findings for the study.

The questionnaire for teachers of traditional schools consisted of questions pertaining to parents' and teachers' opinions and student achievement. The surveys of teachers of year-round schools consisted of questions pertaining to parents' and teachers' opinions and student achievement.

### *Procedures*

Classroom teachers were chosen at random from schools in Blount and Sevier Counties. In addition, parents were selected to participate in the study by answering written questionnaires. The participants in this study remained anonymous. All participants were asked to return their questionnaires within a designated time. Returned surveys were then analyzed. Proper permission and authorization to conduct the study were obtained.

### *Data Analysis*

In order to analyze the collected data, the results were compared to see if there were positive correlations between traditional and year-round schools. The findings revealed which school calendar was more effective in promoting student achievement and overall parent and teacher satisfaction. The data that were received from the surveys were tallied and charted to show the correlations between the two types of schools.

### *Organization of the Study*

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 contains the introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, limitations and delimitations, operational definitions, participants, research design, procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 2 provides the review of literature related to year-round schooling. The topics included in this chapter are: history, advantages, disadvantages, student achievement in year-round schools, summer vacation and achievement, transition from traditional to year-round calendar, and a summary of the chapter.

Chapter 3 gives a detailed description of the methodology and procedures used in the study as well as data collection. It contains the design of the research, population, measurement instrument, data analysis, and the research hypotheses.

Chapter 4 presents the data analysis. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the findings along with conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### *History*

The traditional school calendar was developed for two primary reasons: agrarian needs and lack of air conditioning (Morison, 2002). Many children had to be absent from school during the summer months to help work in fields and the summer heat made school rooms very uncomfortable. Children could only attend school during the nonsummer months (Metzker, 2002). Because of changes in modern farming techniques, it is no longer necessary for children to carry out these farming responsibilities, and most schools are now equipped with air-conditioning to provide comfortable learning environments throughout the year. According to Bradford (1991), less than 3% of the workforce was engaged in agriculture in the 1990s. This out-dated practice has continued to be a part of the learning schedule (Warrick-Harris, 1995). It is human nature to resist change; therefore, many have been continuing this method (Warrick-Harris). Year-round education advocates have been calling for a redesigning of the traditional school calendar toward a goal of improving instructional opportunities and promoting learning (Sheane, 1994).

Year-round schools were familiar to children in colonial times, although the summer months involved fewer hours (Morison, 2000). Nevertheless, school attendance was not mandatory until the 1800s. In many American cities during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, year-round schooling was the rule often for 11 months of the year. In 1900, the number of school days was shortened to 180 (Morison).

Sheane (1994) agreed that year-round education was not a recent phenomenon in the United States or in other countries. Most people give credit to Bluffton, Indiana for having the first year-round education program in 1904. As documented in *Year-Round Education: History Philosophy, Future* (Glines, 1995), records from the early 1900s described year-round programs in a variety of communities including Newark, New Jersey in 1912; Minot, North Dakota in 1917; Omaha, Nebraska in 1924; Nashville, Tennessee in 1925; Aliquippa, Pennsylvania in 1928; and Ambridge, Pennsylvania in 1931. These schools were begun for many reasons. Year-round schools in Newark were developed to help immigrants learn English and enable students to accelerate. In Bluffton, they were developed to enhance learning and create additional classrooms. Those in Minot were developed to meet the needs of the “laggards.” The schools in Aliquippa and Ambridge were developed for space. In Omaha, they were developed to offer continuous vocational training programs. Finally, Nashville's year-round schools were developed to improve the quality of education (Glines, 1997).

According to Glines (1997), William Wirt, the superintendent who began the first year-round education program in Bluffton, created one of the most noted calendar options. Moving to Gary, Indiana, he instituted the work-study-play school and the famous year-round platoon system. Wirt, along with advocates from Nashville, Aliquippa, Omaha, Minneapolis, and Newark, led the pre-1940 continuous learning philosophies and paved the way for the current year-round programs. Although there were numerous efforts to renew the plans from 1946 to 1966 that did not survive the late 1930s depression years, the concept was not reactivated until 1968-1970 in communities in Missouri, Illinois, California, and Minnesota. The majority of the districts that adopted the year-round calendar during the 1970-1990 period were primarily

interested in generating space; the education and community assets became better understood as the calendar variations spread across the nation (Glines, 1997).

Within the last 20 years, Ballinger (1987) founded the National Association for Year-Round Education (NAYRE) the largest and most active organization supporting year-round education in the United States. NAYRE is a year-round school calendar advocacy group that sponsors conferences and conventions for school administrators, board members, teachers, and other individuals to provide leadership and service on all aspects of time and learning. NAYRE also provides, for a fee, consultants who work with local school systems to encourage communities to embrace year-round school calendars and then assist the schools in making the transition to year-round education (National Association of Year-Round Education, 2007).

According to Warrick-Harris (1995), one way for schools to respond to today's shift in societal structures and academic expectations would be to implement year-round education. McMillen (2001) stated that year-round schools were generally organized on a 180-day calendar; however, these days were arranged differently from traditional calendars. The year-round calendar shortened the summer break and lengthened other breaks throughout the school year. The calendar was typically organized into instructional blocks and vacation periods that were evenly distributed across 12 months (McMillen). Many people have been confused by the term year-round education. People hear the term year-round education and think of students going to school 12 months instead of 9 months. Many people misinterpret and are not aware that students still generally attend 180 days of school, which is the same as the traditional schools. Year-round schools offer a more even flow of learning for students. The traditional school curriculum is still the basis for instruction for teachers in year-round schools.

### *Various Year-Round Educational Calendar Options*

In order to understand better year-round schooling, one must be aware of the different formats. School districts considering year-round schooling can choose from two basic options: single-track and multi-track schedules. Quinlan, George, and Emmett (1987) defined year-round education as a reorganization of the school calendar into instructional blocks and vacations distributed across the calendar year to ensure continuous learning. For example, the more popular single track was generally 45, 60, or 90 days of mandatory attendance followed by a 3-week break. The 3-week intersession break offered students a chance to attend remedial or enrichment activities, which increased students' exposure to the curriculum. In many districts, during the 3-week intersession, the school libraries remained open and school nurses were available (McGlynn, 2002). The single-track calendars were made available for all students to be off at the same time. Students benefited from more continuous learning patterns and a reduced need for review (Serifs, 1990).

The following charts compare the distribution of days in school and days on break on the 9-month traditional calendar versus the distribution of days on a balanced single-track calendar. Weekends are excluded from the charts. Both charts represent a standard school year of 180 days (National Association for Year-Round Education, 2008). Figure 1 shows the traditional school calendar.

## Traditional Calendar

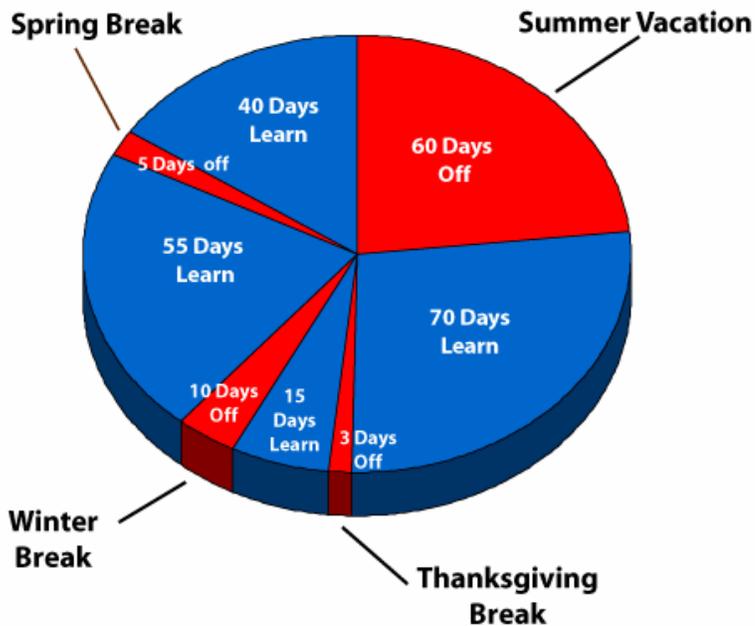


Figure 1. Traditional School Calendar

Source: National Association for Year-Round Education (2008)

The traditional calendar features a long summer vacation of 12 weeks followed by a long period of in-session days, with the first break coming at Thanksgiving. The winter holidays are followed by 55 in-session days before a short spring break (National Association for Year-Round Education, 2008). Figure 2 shows the balanced single-track calendar.

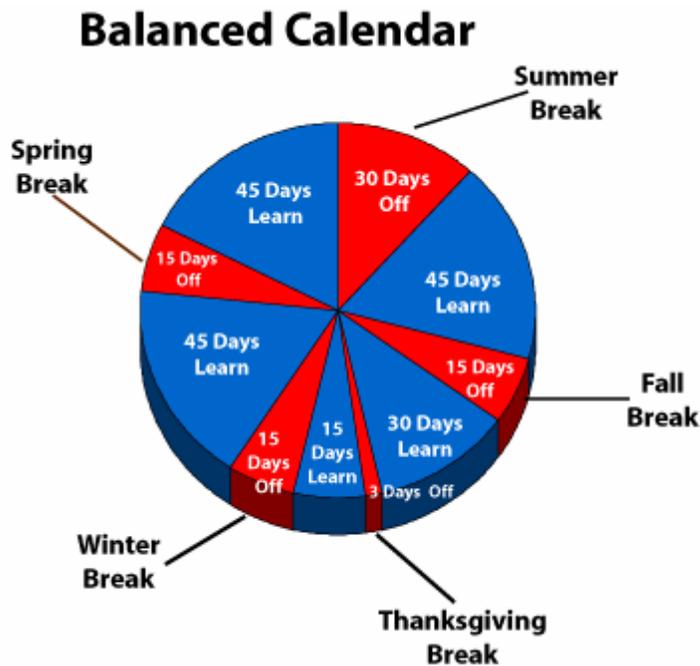


Figure 2. Balanced Single-Track Calendar

Source: National Association for Year-Round Education (2008)

The single-track calendar reduces the long summer break and simply apportions those days throughout the school year producing more frequent breaks and thus limiting long periods of in session days as well as longer vacations (National Association for Year-Round Education).

The alternative calendar is called the multi track. Originally, schools might have adopted a multi-track calendar to help with overcrowding. Multi-track calendars allowed districts to educate more students without spending money on new facilities. Chaika (1999) noted that multi tracking allowed schools to enroll more students than the building would ordinarily hold. One multi-track option has been a 60-20 calendar where students attend school for 60 days and are off for 20 days. This track had four schedules where only three fourths of the students attended school at the same time. Children could be placed in alternating vacation sequences and one

track would always be on vacation. This track might save many school systems money by offering more classroom availability and allowing schools to accommodate more students

Many varieties of year-round schedules have been implemented. Estimates on the exact number varied, although it has been estimated that at least 30 different scheduling patterns existed (Quilan et al., 1987). Only the most common of these will be addressed. These were:

1. The *45-15 Single Track Plan* is currently the most popular of the year-round calendars. In this plan, the year is divided into four 9-week periods, separated by four 3-week vacations or intercessions. Students and teachers attend school for 9 weeks (45 days), and then take a 3-week vacation (15 days). This sequence of sessions and vacations repeats four times each year, thus providing the usual 36 weeks or 180 days of school attendance. Four additional weeks each year are allocated to winter holidays, spring vacation, and national, state, or local holidays.
2. The *45-15 Multi-Track Plan* normally divides students into four groups. While groups A, B, and C are in school, D is on vacation. When D returns, A goes on vacation. The rotation continues every 3 weeks, thus providing 33% additional space in the school. Each track has its own 45-15 schedule of 9 weeks in school and 3 weeks on vacation.
3. The *60-20 Plan*, students attend school for 60 days and vacation for 20 days. Students rotate through the year until they have had three 60-day terms and three 20-day vacations. This plan can be conducted in either single-track or multi-track plan format.
4. The *90-30 Plan* allows for two 90-day semesters separated by a 30-day vacation period twice a year; the schools are closed during the traditional winter holiday period

and spring vacation. This calendar may be conducted in either single- or multi-track formats.

5. The *Concept 6 Plan* is particularly useful when there is a lack of space. It requires that students be divided into three groups, with one group always on vacation, thus releasing a considerable amount of space (up to 50%) for instructional use. There are six terms, but students must attend two of the four terms consecutively. Group A begins in July for the first 43 days; group B then joins it for another 43 days. Group C enters, but group A having completed its 86 days, goes on vacation for 43 days.
6. The *Flexible All Year Plan School* is open for instruction approximately 240 days per year. Students are required to attend the minimum number of days designated by each state. This plan requires placing curriculum in smaller unit packages. This plan saves space by individually tailoring vacations increasing space by 20% to 100%.
7. The *Four Quarter Plan* is four 12-week blocks: fall, winter, spring, and summer. Students attend three of the four quarters. The curriculum is organized so that each quarter is a separate entity. A course begins and ends with each 12-week period.
8. The *Quinmester or Five-Track Plan* is where the school year is divided into five terms of 45 days each. There are five terms in each track. Students attend four of the five for 180 days of instructional use annually. This plan is usually used on a multi-track basis. It provides for a common summer break or approximately 3 weeks for all students.
9. The *Orchard Plan* is a five track, 60-15 calendar. Students are assigned to classes of 30, but only 28 rotate at a time (five groups of seven A, B, C, D, and E in each classroom). The teacher retains his or her own room, teaches 225 days, receives

commensurate pay, and still has 8 weeks of vacation days. The students rotate in groups of seven. This plan increases capacity about 25%.

These are only a few of the approximately 30 year-round education calendar options (Barber, 1996; Fox, 2000; Glines, 1997; Gregory, 1994; National Association of Year-Round Education; Palmer & Bennis, 1999; Weaver, 1992b; Wildman et al., 1999).

### *Advantages*

There are several potential advantages to year-round education. Worthen and Zsiray (1994) concluded in their study that achievement was equal or greater than achievement in traditional schools, students and teachers in year-round schools had positive attitudes, and most parents were satisfied with year-round schools as long as they were well implemented. Some of the perceived advantages of year-round education included (a) improved achievement, (b) improved teacher and student attendance, (c) reduction in discipline problems, (d) reduction in teacher stress, (e) increased motivation among teachers and students after returning refreshed from more frequent breaks, and (f) increased availability of enrichment opportunities during intercessions (Palmer & Bemis, 1999). Proponents of year-round education pointed to Japan, where student scores were higher than those were in the U.S. and where students attended classes 220 days a year on average as opposed to 180 days in America (Lehrer, 2001). The benefits attributed to multi-track programs were easement of overcrowding, reduction in class size, opportunities for teachers to work year-round, and better use of facilities with potential for cost savings (Brekke, 1992; Stenvall, 2000). According to the director of Duke University's program in education, "Students who attend year-round school may give up a few days at the pool, but

they gain a small advantage over their counterparts who take a 10- to 12-week break for summer vacation" (Cooper, 2003, p.23).

Educators found several benefits associated with year-round calendars. These included the reduction of teacher burnout, lower dropout rates, and fewer discipline problems. Year-round schooling increased students' academic retention and overall achievement. The year-round school calendar allowed families opportunities to take vacations at times that were more convenient with their schedules (Ballinger, 1987). This type of calendar also provided the opportunity for students who had fallen behind or those who needed to catch up to take remedial classes during the extended time. This schedule change often allowed students to feel more enthusiastic and motivated about school (O'Neil & Adamson, 1993). In addition, this change in schedule provided teachers who were on another track the opportunity to make extra money (Haser & Nasser, 2003). This benefited students by allowing them to have a substitute who was well trained in the curriculum and skills that were being taught. According to Christie (2003), students in traditional schools who fall behind do not have an opportunity to catch up on any skills that have been missed.

In schools offering intersession programs during the vacation periods, teachers credited the intersession with enhancing and supplementing the regular curriculum (Quinlan et al., 1987). In addition, intersession courses provided opportunities for teachers to experiment with different curriculum and grade levels (Zykowski, Mitchell, Houston, & Gavin, 1991). Another advantage for teachers has been that less review time was necessary at the beginning of each instructional block as researchers have demonstrated that the shorter vacation periods reduced summer learning loss (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, & Greathouse 1996). Researchers have claimed that this was especially true for the low socioeconomic status level and high-risk students

(Gandara & Fish, 1994; Kneese & Knight, 1995; Quinlan et al.). This might be because students have access to immediate remediation in year-round education (Curry, Washington, & Zyskowski, 1997).

Ballinger (1998) deemed that summer learning loss was a reality known by both experience and research. The year-round schedule might benefit students who are nonEnglish speaking students by giving them extra opportunities to continue learning their second language. Children with special needs benefited as well (Cooper et al., 2003). To those who would suggest summer school as a solution, it might be well to remember that fewer than half of the United States students are involved in structured summer learning programs. Furthermore, summer remedial instruction might come too late and could generally lack sufficient focus to be of much assistance (Ballinger, 1995). The extended summer vacation could hinder the instruction being learned and these students might fall behind. Christie (2003) pointed out because children learned best when learning was continuous, year-round schools provided a more positive learning environment.

It was also reported that students on year-round calendars might have improved attitudes because of their more frequent breaks from school (Palmer & Bemis, 1999). Fardig's (1992) research indicated that after 1 year of experiencing a 60-15 calendar, students felt more positively about year-round education. Researchers such as Alkin (1983) and Herman (1991) in two other studies used the Student Attitude Measure to compare the self-concept of students in large, urban year-round schools to a national norm group. Results from both studies indicated that the year-round students had significantly lower self-concepts than did the norm group. Two additional researchers compared year-round students to those on a traditional schedule (Nygaard, 1974; Shields, 1996). One study determined no difference using the Self Appraisal Inventory,

whereas the other study indicated that students on a traditional calendar scored significantly higher on items having to do with self-acceptance on the Educational Process Questionnaire (Palmer & Bemis).

In traditional schools, many students forget important skills during the summer. Consequently, teachers might waste a vast amount of learning time in reteaching skills that have been forgotten over the long summer vacation. In year-round schools, the students remembered important skills after only a few days (Warrick-Harris, 1995).

Educators could also benefit from year-round school calendar changes. Levine and Ornstein (1993) found that teachers were not as fatigued as a result of the shorter instructional cycles. Teachers also showed fewer absences from school and spent less time reviewing materials they had already taught (Barron, 1993; Kocek, 1996; Serifs, 1990).

According to Palmer and Bemis (1999), teachers' attitudes improved with experience in year-round programs. The attitudes measured were about year-round education, school quality, scheduling of personal activities, and morale. One study comparing a year-round to a traditional calendar indicated that the teachers who were most accepting and positive towards the year-round schedule had the most exposure to it, whereas staff on traditional calendars had the most negative attitudes about it (Palmer & Bemis; Shields, 1996). Costa (1987) found that when teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school took the Elements of Quality survey concerning topics such as management, community confidence in school, and organization of school, they scored higher than did teachers on a traditional calendar in all areas, although not significantly so. Another study focusing on the ease of scheduling personal and family activities showed that teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school expressed significantly higher satisfaction in this area than did traditional calendar teachers (Elsberry, 1992). Finally, when

questioned about school climate and effectiveness, teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school had a more positive attitude than did those on a traditional calendar in 15 out of 18 survey questions, although no significance tests were conducted (Palmer & Bemis; Prohm & Baenen, 1996).

Three studies conducted on parent attitudes toward year-round schooling indicated that opinions became more positive over time (Fardig, 1992; Nygaard, 1974; Pelavin, 1979). According to Palmer and Bemis (1999), 53% favored year-round education prior to implementation, whereas 79% favored it at the end of the first year.

Along with students, teachers, and parents receiving benefits from year-round schools, the community and school might reap the rewards as well. Money might be saved by choosing the year-round model over construction and it could increase the school's capacity by 25% (Serifs, 1990). In addition, the schools could experience less vandalism that might occur during the summer months. There also might be fewer juvenile delinquencies (Serifs). According to Chaika (1999), the additional days added to a school year have cost approximately \$11 per day per student or about \$440 per year per student. Retaining a student has cost about \$6,000 per year in addition to remediation costs and possible expensive special education costs (Chaika).

Sheane (1994) noted that a year-round calendar offered teachers and administrators opportunities to be creative in the types of extracurricular activities offered to students. The year-round calendar permitted the activities to take place throughout the year. Contrary to popular opinion, year-round education has not damaged athletics programs. Rather, student athletes benefited in two ways: (a) a significant portion of the sport's season was free of exams and homework requirements thereby allowing an increased concentration on the sport and (b)

student athletes experiencing academic difficulty used the intercessions to remediate the problem and retrieve their good standing (Ballinger, 1995).

American students attend school fewer days per year than do students in almost any industrialized country (“Year-Round School,” 1998). Table 1 shows a comparison of the average number of days in school between the United States and 15 other countries:

Table 1

*Average Number of Days in School Per Year for Countries*

Country	# of Days in School Per Year
Japan	243
South Korea	220
Israel, Luxembourg	216
Netherlands, Scotland, Thailand	200
England, Hungary	192
Swaziland	191
Finland, New Zealand, Nigeria	190
Spain, Sweden, United States	180

By the time Japanese teens complete 12<sup>th</sup> grade, they have spent the equivalent of at least 3 more years in school than their U.S. counterparts have spent (“Year-Round School,” 1998). Standardized tests results typically show that Japanese students’ scores are far superior to those of students in the United States (Wooley, 1996).

### *Disadvantages*

In addition to many perceived benefits of year-round education, researchers also noted some perceived challenges as well. Weaver (1992a) stated that students forgot information regardless of the length of their break. With year-round education, teachers have had to review four times for each of the four breaks instead of one time for the long summer break. Consequently, this might result in some students needing extra remedial assistance (Warrick-Harris, 1995). Another issue found was the one of summer programs. When schools go year-round, the summer youth camps might begin to suffer as a result of the school building being used. Also, summer businesses might lack the assistance of high-school students who are attending school. Many students might miss extracurricular camps because of school (Weaver, 1992a). In addition, multi-track calendars might require additional operating costs, lack sufficient time for maintenance, be inconvenient for teachers (who might have to change classrooms during the year), lead to overworked clerical staff or parents, and result in some students missing school events scheduled at off-track times (Stenvall, 2000; Worthen & Zsiray, 1994).

In many school districts, all schools were not on the year-round schedule (Warrick-Harris 1995). This might disrupt families with children in different vacation sequences. For example, siblings might be on different tracks if one child attended the elementary school and the other child attended the secondary school. This might disrupt family vacations. It would be hard for parents to schedule a vacation when their children attended school on different calendars (Barber, 1996). Another issue affected by the vacation sequences occurred when students participated in extra curricular activities (Cooper et al., 2003). If year-round student teams or clubs competed with traditional calendar schools, they might miss an opportunity to compete in

important events or activities (for example: football, track, or debate teams). Secondary students who attended year-round schools could lose the opportunity to be employed full-time during the summer break (Peters, 2002). Students tend to move in and out of jobs with the more frequent breaks. Employers might not be willing to accommodate or hire students from year-round schools because of their lack of time commitment.

There are also disadvantages for teachers. Teachers who work in year-round schools might find it difficult to further their education (Warrick-Harris, 1995). Many universities offer advanced degrees only during the summer months when traditional calendar schools are on break. Another issue concerning employees such as principals and administrators on the 12-month calendar was that their building was occupied by others while they were on vacation; this created a need for additional administrative support (Cooper et al., 2003). Another negative factor was the cost; operating the school was higher when paying 12-month employees. There was also more wear and tear on the building (Serifs, 1990). McGlynn (2002) acknowledged, “The year-round calendar costs the school district an additional \$30 per student” (p. 40).

According to Hasser and Nasser (2003), when preparing for inservice and staff development for teachers, it was difficult to schedule because of different teachers' schedules. As a result, the curriculum might be repetitive if there was less communication between the teachers. In addition, there were fewer teaching techniques taught to the teachers by outside professionals (Hasser & Nasser).

### *Student Achievement in Year-Round Schools*

Merino (1983) stated, “While year-round schooling may be useful for some things, it has no beneficial or detrimental impact on academics” (p. 302). Most studies indicated no

significant differences in academic achievement between traditional and year-round schedules. One researcher concluded that students in year-round schools read fewer books than did traditional schooled children (Campbell, 1994). However, another study conducted by Roby (1995) showed that the students in the year-round schools did better in math and reading than did those students attending schools on a traditional calendar.

O'Neil and Adamson (1993) encouraged the use of year-round schooling as a solution to increases in enrollment. O'Neil and Solomon concluded, "Year-round schooling has not raised test scores, but neither has student achievement suffered. Ultimately converting to year-round school creates many difficulties and shows no clear advantages" (p. 92). As stated by Howell (1988), the only systems benefiting over time were those for whom overcrowding had become a devastating problem.

Palmer and Bemis (1999) examined the effects of year-round education on achievement in the last 3 decades. Most of the studies were conducted using elementary school students. Altogether, 75 individual comparisons of standardized achievement tests in reading, math, language, writing, science, social studies, or the complete battery were obtained. Most included elementary schools that had followed a year-round schedule for 3 to 5 years, whereas others had implemented such programs 1-21 years ago (Palmer & Bemis). Table 2 presents a summary count of statistically significant positive or negative effects of year-round education on student achievement. Because the results did not weigh any study by sample size, the results should be viewed suggestive of achievement trends.

Table 2

*Summary of Statistically Significant Directional Findings of Studies (1980-1999) of Year-Round Schooling Effects on Achievement*

Subject	Positive Year-Round	Negative Year-Round	Sign Test <i>p</i> Level
Reading	11	2	.015
Math	9	2	.035
Language & Writing	5	2	NS
Science	1	0	---
Composite	1	0	---
Total	27	6	.005

Source: Palmer and Bemis, 1999.

According to Palmer and Bemis (1999), there were 42 tests of year-round schools' effects that revealed no effect or pattern. The results in Table 2 show that 27 of the 33 comparisons indicated significant positive effects of year-round education on achievement. Likewise, 11 of 13 comparisons in reading and 9 of 11 in math showed significant positive results. In summary, it is reasonable to conclude that students attending year-round schools were likely to perform as well as if not better than their peers in traditional 9-month programs, especially at the upper elementary school level (Palmer & Bemis).

*Summer Vacation and Achievement*

Researchers have found that summer vacation hinders learning. The summer vacation puts students behind by at least 1 month of instruction. Student achievement scores were at least 1 month lower when they returned to school because of the effects of the extended summer

vacation (Cooper et al., 2003). Various skills were lost in the areas of math and spelling because, as Cooper et al. (2003) noted, without practice, facts and procedural skills were more prone to be lost. There was a greater overall loss in math skills than in reading skills. Cooper et al. (2003) speculated that children of middle class homes would have had better opportunities to practice reading skills than they would to practice math. The families of lower socioeconomic status might not have had the appropriate materials or parental guidance to practice and develop either reading or math skills. Many parents of lower socioeconomic status work many hours throughout the day. This might cause younger children to stay either by themselves or with older siblings. Summer programs were not as easily available for these families (Warrick-Harris, 1995).

According to Warrick-Harris (1995), single track year-round schools generally offered a 3-week intercession every 9 weeks. Students benefited from the optional remediation programs offered during intercessions as opposed to lengthy repetition during the regular session that might put them behind other students (Serifs, 1990). At this time, students would have the opportunity to attend enrichment or remedial classes. During the 1st week of intersession classes, childcare facilities were available for students with working parents. The 2nd week of intersession classes offered different enrichment activities for students. The 3rd week offered students a chance to get some remedial help (Warrick- Harris).

As reported by Barber (1996), students who attended year-round schools, both those who were on a fee waiver and those who were not, had the opportunity to attend remedial courses during the 3-week break free of charge. These classes were small in size and were taught by well-trained teachers. When students attended remedial classes, they were more likely to be better prepared when they returned to the classroom (Barber).

### *Transition From a Traditional Calendar to a Year-Round Calendar*

Shields and Oberg (2000b) pointed out that when a school district decides to change the traditional school calendar to a year-round calendar there is a lot of preparation that must take place. In order for the change to be successful, the district must implement extensive communication, consultation, and planning. According to Shields and Oberg (2000b), proper communication was necessary between the school's faculty, parents, and community members. The facts of year-round calendars must be presented to each of these groups and they must be allowed the opportunity to discuss the issues. At these meetings, the participants used a question and answer format, thus, they became more aware of the advantages and disadvantages between the two types of calendars (Shield & Oberg, 2000b). The community members were involved in the planning process and were able to make choices regarding the calendar. Teachers, parents, and the community might be more willing to accept the new modified calendar because of this inclusion (McGlynn, 2002).

Weaver (1992a) added that before the new calendar could be implemented, the community must have had frequent meetings over a year-long period to discuss any concerns that they might have about the modified calendar. These meetings allowed community members time to become better educated about the new calendar. It was important that in the community, the calendar and rules of the new schedule were flexible to staff and students so that this could be a success (Shields & Oberg, 2000b).

Parents and teachers might be hesitant about participating in the year-round calendar. After the first year, if these stakeholders were not satisfied with the year-round calendar, they would be permitted to transfer to a traditional school setting that was more appropriate to their needs (Shields & Oberg, 2000b). Shields and Oberg (2000b) found that the majority of teachers

and students were happy with their decision. As a result, this type of school calendar has become a popular trend in communities and across the United States.

Because of the complexity of implementing a year-round school calendar, it is important to view other schools and districts that have had success. Some successful implementation ideas were:

1. involve all local education stakeholders in the decision-making process (Serifs, 1990, p. 9);
2. keep them informed throughout the process to minimize conflict (Serifs, p. 9); and
3. schedule small informational meetings with parents, school staff, and the community rather than large community meetings in the beginning. (Ballinger, 1995, p. 29)

Serifs (1990) suggested the following components be considered before implementation of a year-round school calendar:

1. configuration of the calendar; will it be 45 or 60 days of attendance and 15 days of vacation, or something else?;
2. number of student tracks that will work best;
3. number of holidays during the school year;
4. unique needs of the school and community;
5. provision of ample time for staff development;
6. recognition that the year-round schedule will require many changes;
7. prepare to address curricula concerns such as sequencing and continuity, and student remediation and enrichment; and
8. do not rush implementation and do not make any hasty evaluations. Accurate assessment of the program will take time. (pp. 11-12)

In addition, Ballinger (1995; 1998) added the following suggestions:

1. continue professional development regularly about year-round education, its purposes, its possibilities, its record, its relationship to learning theories and its flexibility (Ballinger, 1995, p. 30);
2. understand that it is impossible to develop a perfect calendar for all. With growing diversity in family lifestyles and student learning needs, it is imperative that districts provide to the greatest degree possible, within financial and administrative constraints, optional calendars for students' varied learning needs (1995, p. 30); and
3. understand that year-round education is a very broad field, with a large number of ways to offer it to parents and students. Staff, parents, and community members who are well grounded in the rationale for year-round education will rarely wish to return to traditional schedule (Ballinger, 1998, p. 660)

In implementing the year-round concept within voluntary conditions, a number of organizational patterns have developed throughout the nation. According to Glines (1997), four patterns have emerged as the most popular and all are preferred for mandating except in the cases of extreme overcrowding. The first was the *school-within-a-school* plan. A number of sites offered both the 9-month and year-round options within the same building. The second was the *pair geographically near schools* plan. Here, one school remained on the 9-month calendar while the second school adopted the year-round calendar (Sheane, 1994). This pattern permitted families to have a choice of school calendar. A third method was to create the *neighborhood cluster* plan where one of three or four buildings offered the option of continuous learning design. A fourth effective approach was to develop a structure that could accommodate either a

9-month or continuous year option within the same calendar, such as was possible in the *flexible all-year* plan (Glines, 1997).

*Issues to Address Prior to Year-Round Education Implementation*

According to Weaver (1992b), there were approximately 30 areas to be addressed when considering year-round education. Although year-round education has the potential to solve budgetary, population, and even some academic problems, there were a myriad of issues for administrators to consider and some, such as how year-round education affected families, were not discussed until there was already a problem (Glines, 1997). Following is a brief description according to Glines (1997) of some of the considerations that could affect a district's decision to implement or not to implement year-round education.

1. year-round education affects every part of a school. While a year-round program may work in an urban or migrant environment, it does not mean it will work everywhere. One should consider a school's needs carefully prior to choosing year-round education;
2. families and family traditions can be disrupted by year-round education especially if siblings are attending schools with different calendars; and
3. although it is poorly documented, year-round administrators are especially susceptible to burnout. Planning vacations and communication with teachers can be difficult. (p. 24)

Some other procedures to consider prior to implementation according to Palmer and Bemis (1999) included:

1. analyze future environment;

2. consider ethnic balances;
3. select from among thirty calendars;
4. determine how to offer choices;
5. assess impact on education;
6. review the research and study the effects on all levels K-12;
7. plan new maintenance schedules;
8. decide on food service;
9. plan child care assistance;
10. examine potential budget impacts;
11. consider faculty modifications; and
12. involve students in understanding and planning the program. (n. p.)

Weaver (1992b) pointed out, "Without the long summer break, teachers may not be able to continue their own education by taking university or professional development classes" (p. 5).

It is important to examine all materials related to students, staff, families, communities, quality of life, and learning. When correctly implemented, year-round education is an asset--incorrectly designed year-round education is a major liability (Glines, 1997; Weaver, 1992b).

### *Summary*

Over the past decade, year-round education has become increasingly popular. Many school districts are moving away from the traditional calendar that is based on the agrarian community of long ago. Because schools are now equipped with modern technology, many districts are becoming more modernized. The schools are progressing and changing to better meet the needs of generations to come.

Year-round schools have the possibility of offering many benefits to today's working families. There are different options available for families to choose when deciding on their children's education. Single track year-round schools appear to offer more opportunities for struggling students with the remedial classes being offered during the extended breaks. High achieving students also reap the rewards from the classes offered during the breaks through enrichment and discovery classes that are presented with the year-round calendar.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference of opinions of teachers and parents of students who attend year-round calendar schools from those of teachers and parents of students who attend traditional calendar schools. The two year-round schools in East Tennessee and two traditional calendar schools in East Tennessee were in neighboring counties with similar demographics.

#### *Research Questions and Hypotheses*

This study addressed the following research questions and associated hypotheses:

1. Are there differences in parents' and teachers' combined perspectives of academic performances in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>1</sub> : There is no difference in parents' and teachers' combined perspectives of academic performances in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools.

2. Is there a difference in opinions about teaching and learning for teachers and parents of children who participate in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between teachers who participate in year-round schools and teachers who participate in traditional schools.

Ho2<sub>2</sub>: There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between parents of children who participate in year-round schools and parents of children who participate in traditional schools.

3. Is there a difference in teachers' or parents' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school?

Ho3<sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in teachers' opinions of a traditional school calendar as opposed to a year-round school calendar.

Ho3<sub>2</sub>: There is no difference in parents' opinions of a traditional school calendar as opposed to a year-round school calendar.

4. Is there a difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional schools?

Ho4: There is no difference in opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional schools.

### *Participating Schools*

Participants were chosen from four East Tennessee schools because of their similar demographics in enrollment, suspensions, expulsions, attendance, and promotions (Tennessee Department of Education, 2007). The participants were 44 classroom teachers who taught in schools with a traditional school calendar as well 42 who taught in schools with a year-round calendar. Based upon location, teachers were chosen from schools in neighboring counties. Teachers who taught third and fourth grade at the participating schools were asked to complete a survey. In addition, 340 parents of children attending each type of school were randomly

selected and were asked to complete a survey. Table 3 shows demographics of students from the schools used in the study.

Table 3

*Demographics*

	School A %	School B %	School C %	School D %
White	94.1	80.2	96.1	90.4
African American	1.7	11.6	1.6	1.5
Asian-Pacific Islander	3.1	0.2	0.9	3.4
Economically Disadvantaged	12.2	69.5	25.3	52.8
Female	46.5	48.7	48.9	47.8
Male	53.5	51.3	51.1	52.2

*Research Design*

The research was of a quantitative nature. The research consisted of analyzing each of the four schools' teacher and parent surveys. The researcher used a survey with a written questionnaire format. Responses to these questions helped develop findings for the study.

The teacher survey consisted of three sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school, opinions about their school calendar, and opinions about their work environment. The parent survey consisted of two sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school and opinions about their children's school calendar.

This study focused on whether or not year-round school calendars are more beneficial than traditional calendars are for students' academic success as revealed by teachers' and parents' perceptions of each type of school calendar.

### *Survey Instrument*

The survey instrument used was influenced by the work of Robin Adams' University School Evaluation Committee Survey. The survey was administered to teachers and parents of students in schools with traditional school calendars as well as schools with year-round school calendars. The survey addressed opinions about teaching and learning at the schools, opinions about school calendar, and teachers' opinions about their work environment (see Appendices C, D, & E).

There were 12 items in the perceptions about teaching and learning section of the survey. These items included questions pertaining to academic performance and academic achievement.

There were 15 items in the opinions about schools section of the survey. These items included questions pertaining to the school calendar's advantages or disadvantages.

### *Procedures*

Classroom teachers from four East Tennessee elementary schools were selected to participate in the study by answering written questionnaires. In addition, parents of students in each school were randomly selected to participate in the study by answering written questionnaires. The participants in this study remained anonymous. All participants were asked to return their questionnaires within a designated time. Proper permission and authorization to conduct the study was obtained (see Appendices A & B).

The teacher survey was administered to teachers in the four schools in written format. At the same time, the parent survey along with a return envelope was sent home to parents within the participating schools via the teachers.

Letters seeking permission were sent to all of the applicable directors of schools prior to administration of the survey (see Appendix A). Letters were also sent to the principals of the four schools participating in the study (see Appendix B).

### *Data Analysis*

Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0). Independent-samples *t* tests were conducted to analyze research questions. The hypotheses were evaluated at .05 level of significance.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference of opinions of teachers and parents of students who attend year-round calendar schools from those of teachers and parents of students who attend traditional calendar schools. A total of 426 parents and teachers were surveyed. This group consisted of 180 traditional calendar school parents, 44 traditional calendar school teachers, 160 parents who have children attending year-round calendar schools, and 42 teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school. Of these, 208 (49%) responded—76 traditional calendar school parents, 64 parents who have children attending year-round schools, 36 traditional calendar school teachers, and 32 teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school.

Only 3 of the 36 traditional calendar school teachers had previously taught at a year-round school. These 3 teachers preferred teaching at a year-round calendar school. Twenty-seven of the 32 who taught at a year-round school had taught at a traditional calendar school in the past. The teachers reported they preferred teaching at a year-round calendar school. Table 4 shows the number of years the teachers had taught at their current school.

Table 4

*Years of Teaching*

Years at Current School	Traditional	Year-Round
0-5 years	13	6
6-10 years	11	8
11-20 years	7	13
21-30 Years	2	4
30 plus years	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	36	32

The teacher survey (see Appendices C & D) consisted of three sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school, opinions about their school calendar, and opinions about their work environment. The parent survey (see Appendices E & F) consisted of two sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school and opinions about their children’s school calendar. The scale for questions in each section was disagree (1), neutral (2), and agree (3). The responses to questions 16, 19, and 23 on the parent survey and questions 16, 18, 22, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 48, and 50 on the teacher survey were reversed scored. Mean scores were computed for each section, thus producing a teaching and learning opinions mean score, a school calendar opinions mean score, and an educators' opinions mean score.

*Research Question #1*

Are there differences in parents’ and teachers’ combined perspectives of academic performances in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in parents' and teachers' combined perspectives of the teaching and learning environment at year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools.

Table 5 shows the mean for each teaching and learning question for year-round and traditional participants. The means for year-round calendar participants ranged from 2.64 to 3.00 and the means for traditional calendar participants ranged from 2.24 to 2.94.

Table 5

*Teaching and Learning Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Participants*

Participants' Responses to Teaching and Learning Questions	Year-Round (N = 96)		Traditional (N = 112)	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	3.00	0.00	2.84	0.39
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	3.00	0.00	2.72	0.49
3. Learning at this school is fun.	2.98	0.20	2.71	0.47
4. Students respect others who get good grades.	2.92	0.28	2.78	0.44
5. Students seek extra work to receive good grades.	2.64	0.58	2.24	0.67
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively.	2.99	0.10	2.83	0.38
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	2.93	0.26	2.89	0.31
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	2.94	0.24	2.91	0.32
9. I am proud to teach at this school.	3.00	0.00	2.94	0.24
10. Students improve on previous work.	2.92	0.28	2.77	0.44
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	2.90	0.37	2.79	0.43
12. Instructors at this school are preparing students for the future.	2.99	0.10	2.89	0.34

An independent  $t$  test was conducted to determine whether teaching and learning perspectives of year-round schools' parents and teachers differed from those of traditional schools' parents and teachers. The dependent variable was the teaching and learning opinions mean score. The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(206) = 6.67, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_0$  was rejected. The mean scores for year-round schools' parents and teachers were higher ( $M = 2.93, SD = .09$ ) than were those of traditional schools' parents and teachers ( $M = 2.78, SD = .21$ ). Year-round schools' parents and teachers tended to have higher opinions about the teaching and learning environment at their schools compared to traditional schools' parents and teachers. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .20 to .11. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .18$ , was large.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of the teaching and learning opinions mean scores according to participant's group.

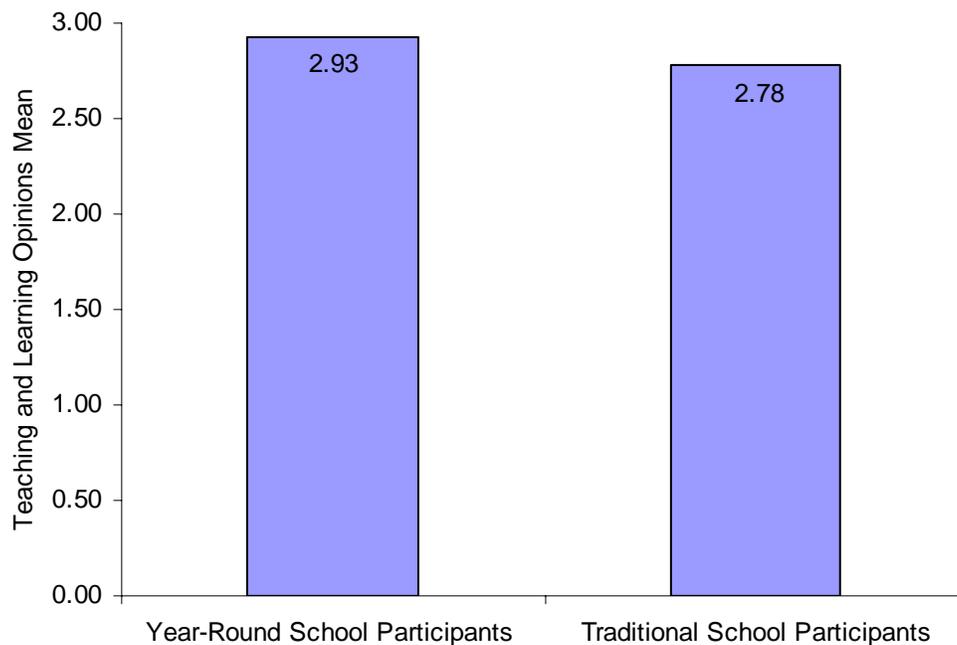


Figure 3. Participants' Teaching and Learning Opinions

Ho<sub>12</sub> : There is no difference in school calendar opinions between parents and teachers who participate in year-round schools and those who participate in traditional schools.

Table 6 shows the mean for each school calendar opinions question for year-round and traditional participants. The means for year-round calendar participants ranged from 2.40 to 2.93 and the means for traditional calendar participants ranged from 2.00 to 2.81.

Table 6

*School Calendar Opinions Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Participants*

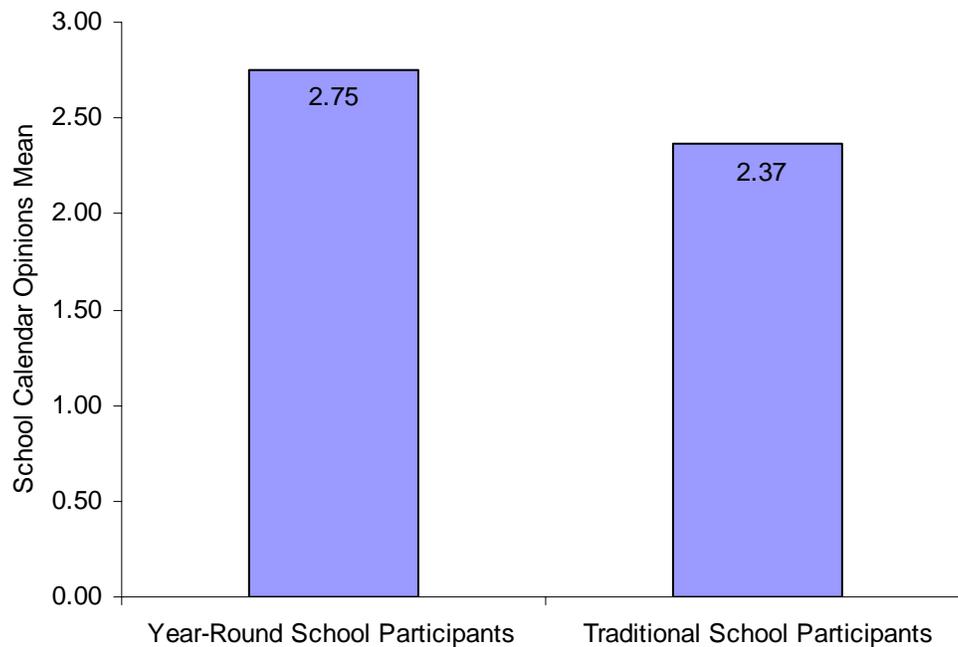
The use of a traditional versus year-round school calendar:	Year-Round (N = 96)		Traditional (N = 112)	
	M	SD	M	SD
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	2.93	0.30	2.81	0.44
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	2.76	0.52	2.43	0.63
15. helps students to improve test scores.	2.83	0.43	2.53	0.60
16. makes it difficult to have a school sports program.	2.54	0.61	2.45	0.70
17. allows families opportunities to take vacations.	2.91	0.39	2.78	0.48
18. presents obstacles for single parents.	2.40	0.67	2.11	0.73
19. allows students to take enrichment classes.	2.82	0.46	2.33	0.65
20. leads to greater retention of learned material.	2.84	0.51	2.17	0.71
21. reduces the amount of time spent in class review.	2.80	0.49	2.00	0.68
22. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	2.45	0.79	2.28	0.74
23. reduces student stress.	2.76	0.48	2.24	0.67
24. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	2.84	0.47	2.27	0.68

Table 6 (continued)

The use of a traditional versus year-round school calendar:	Year-Round ( <i>N</i> = 96)		Traditional ( <i>N</i> = 112)	
	M	SD	M	SD
25. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	2.85	0.43	2.20	0.85
26. motivates students to attend school.	2.84	0.39	2.54	0.66

An independent *t* test was conducted to determine whether opinions about the year-round school calendar for year-round schools' parents and teachers significantly differed from the opinions about the traditional calendar for traditional schools' parents and teachers. The dependent variable was the school calendar opinions mean score equal variances not assumed. The *t* test was significant,  $t(204.32) = 8.63, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_{012}$  was rejected. The mean scores for year-round schools' parents and teachers were higher ( $M = 2.75, SD = .30$ ) than were those of traditional schools' parents and teachers ( $M = 2.37, SD = .32$ ). Year-round schools' parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to traditional schools' parents and teachers. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .46 to .29. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .27$ , was large.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the opinions about school calendar mean scores according to participant's group.



*Figure 4. Participants' School Calendar Opinions*

*Research Question #2*

Is there a difference in opinion about teaching and learning for teachers and parents of children who participate in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>2</sub><sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between teachers who participate in year-round schools and teachers who participate in traditional schools.

The means for each teaching and leaning question as responded to by the teachers are shown in Table 7. The means for teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school ranged from 2.72 to 3.00 and the means for traditional calendar teachers ranged from 2.31 to 3.00.

Table 7

*Teaching and Learning Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Teachers*

Teachers' Responses to Teaching and Learning Questions	Year-Round ( <i>N</i> = 32)		Traditional ( <i>N</i> = 36)	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	3.00	0.00	2.86	0.35
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	3.00	0.00	2.86	0.35
3. Learning at this school is fun.	2.94	0.35	2.64	0.54
4. Students respect others who get good grades.	2.94	0.25	2.89	0.32
5. Students seek extra work to receive good grades.	2.72	0.63	2.31	0.75
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively.	2.97	0.18	2.83	0.38
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	2.97	0.18	2.97	0.17
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	3.00	0.00	2.92	0.37
9. I am proud to teach at this school.	3.00	0.00	3.00	0.00
10. Students improve on previous work.	3.00	0.00	2.86	0.35
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	2.84	0.51	2.72	0.51
12. Instructors at this school are preparing students for the future.	2.97	0.18	2.97	0.17

An independent *t* test was conducted to determine whether year-round school teachers' opinions about teaching and learning environment at their schools differed significantly from those of traditional schools' teachers. The dependent variable was the teacher teaching and learning opinions mean score equal variances not assumed. The *t* test was significant,  $t(51.39) =$

3.72,  $p = .01$ . As a result,  $H_{02_1}$  was rejected. The teaching and learning mean scores for year-round school teachers were higher ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = .09$ ) than were those of traditional school teachers ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = .18$ ). Teachers who taught at year-round calendar schools tended to have higher opinions about their teaching and learning environment compared to teachers who taught at traditional calendar schools. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .19 to .06. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .17$ , was large.

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the teaching and learning mean scores according to the teachers' school type.

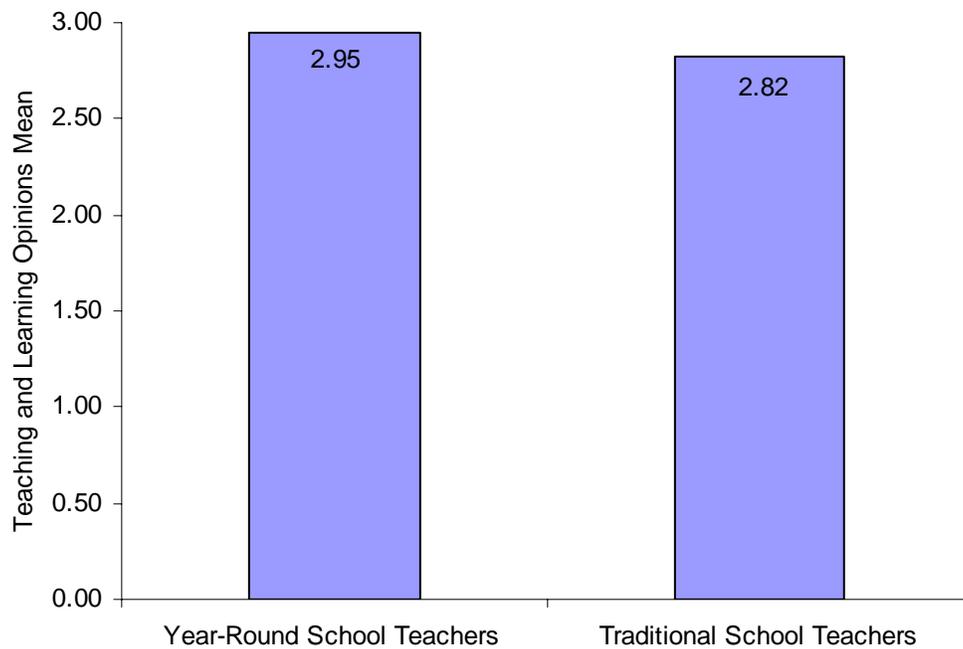


Figure 5. Teachers' Teaching and Learning Opinions

$H_{02_2}$ : There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between parents of children who participate in year-round schools and parents of children who participate in traditional schools.

Table 8 shows the mean for each teaching and learning question for year-round and traditional parents. The means for year-round calendar parents ranged from 2.59 to 3.00 and the means for traditional calendar parents ranged from 2.21 to 2.91.

Table 8

*Teaching and Learning Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Parents*

Parents' Responses to Teaching and Learning Questions	Year-Round (N = 64)		Traditional (N = 76)	
	M	SD	M	SD
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	3.00	0.00	2.83	0.41
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	3.00	0.00	2.66	0.53
3. Learning at this school is fun.	3.00	0.00	2.75	0.44
4. Students respect others who get good grades.	2.91	0.29	2.72	0.48
5. Students seek extra work to receive good grades.	2.59	0.56	2.21	0.64
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively.	3.00	0.00	2.83	0.38
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	2.91	0.29	2.86	0.35
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	2.91	0.29	2.91	0.29
9. I am proud to teach at this school.	3.00	0.00	2.91	0.29
10. Students improve on previous work.	2.88	0.33	2.72	0.48
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	2.92	0.27	2.83	0.38
12. Instructors at this school are preparing students for the future.	3.00	0.00	2.86	0.39

An independent  $t$  test was conducted to determine whether the teaching and learning opinions of parents of children who attend a year-round school differed significantly from those of whose children attend traditional calendar schools. The dependent variable was the parent teaching and learning opinions mean score. The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(138) = 5.66, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_0$  was rejected. The teaching and learning mean scores for year-round schools' parents were higher ( $M = 2.93, SD = .10$ ) than were those of traditional schools' parents ( $M = 2.76, SD = .22$ ). Parents of children who attend year-round schools tended to have higher opinions about the teaching and learning environment at their schools compared to parents of children at schools that follow the traditional calendar. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .23 to .11. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .23$ , was large.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the teaching and learning mean scores according to the parents' school type.

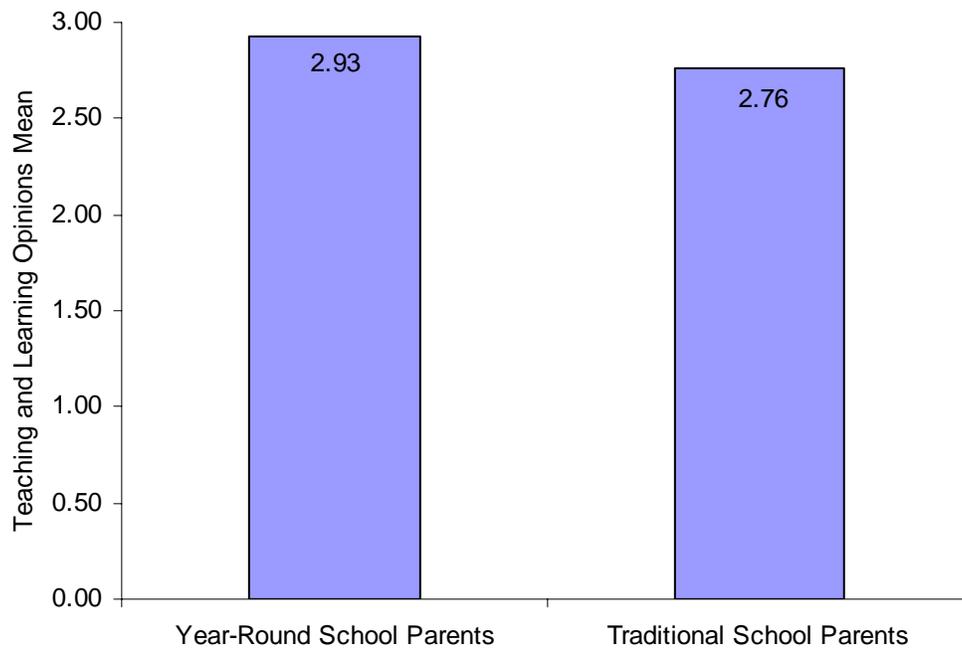


Figure 6. Parents' Teaching and Learning Opinions

*Research Question #3*

Is there a difference in teachers' or parents' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school?

Ho3<sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in teachers' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school.

Table 9 shows the mean for each school calendar opinions question for year-round and traditional teachers. The means for year-round calendar teachers ranged from 2.53 to 3.00 and the means for traditional calendar teachers ranged from 1.97 to 2.92.

Table 9

*School Calendar Opinions Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Teachers*

The use of a traditional versus year-round school calendar:	Year-Round ( <i>N</i> = 32)		Traditional ( <i>N</i> = 36)	
	M	SD	M	SD
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	3.00	0.00	2.92	0.28
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	2.94	0.25	2.53	0.56
15. helps students to improve test scores.	2.97	0.18	2.64	0.59
16. makes it difficult to have a school sports program.	2.69	0.47	2.53	0.70
17. allows families opportunities to take vacations.	2.94	0.35	2.75	0.55
18. presents obstacles for single parents.	2.63	0.55	2.19	0.86
19. allows students to take enrichment classes.	2.94	0.35	2.11	0.78
20. leads to greater retention of learned material.	2.94	0.35	1.97	0.70
21. reduces the amount of time spent in class review.	2.94	0.25	2.03	0.65
22. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	2.53	0.84	2.31	0.67
23. reduces student stress.	2.81	0.47	2.06	0.58
24. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	2.91	0.39	2.11	0.71
25. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	2.94	0.35	1.97	0.88
26. motivates students to attend school.	3.00	0.00	2.44	0.65

An independent *t* test was conducted to determine whether teachers' opinions about their school calendar differed between traditional calendar school teachers and year-round calendar school teachers. The dependent variable was the school calendar opinions mean score. The *t* test

was significant,  $t(55.51) = 8.77, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_{o3_1}$  was rejected. The mean scores for year-round school teachers were higher ( $M = 2.87, SD = .18$ ) than were those of traditional school teachers ( $M = 2.33, SD = .32$ ). Teachers at year-round schools tended to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to teachers at traditional calendar schools. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .67 to .42. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .54$ , was large.

Figure 7 shows the distribution of the teachers' school calendar opinions mean scores according to the school type.

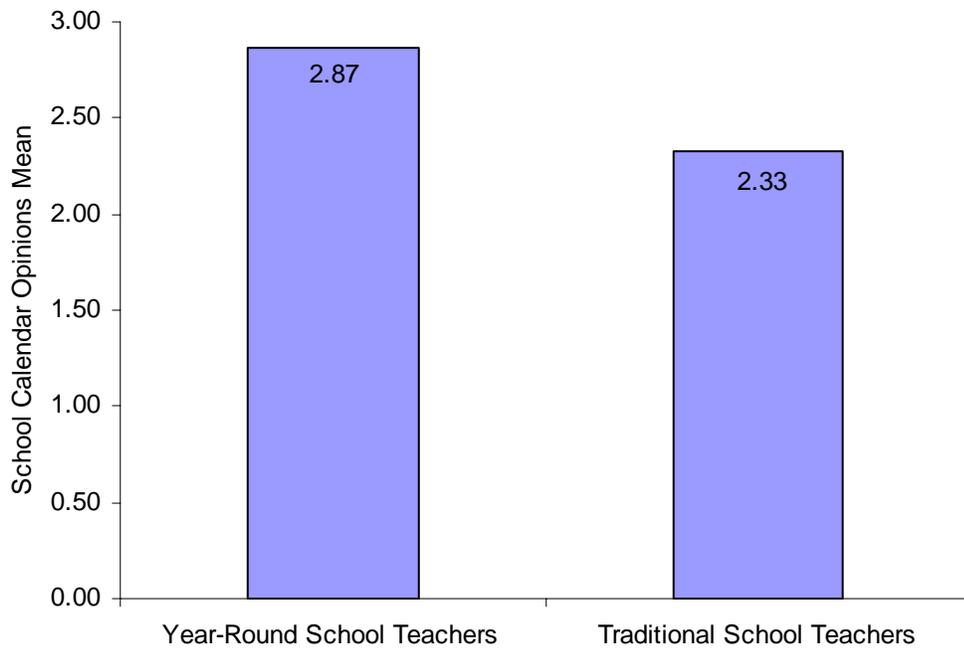


Figure 7. Teachers' School Calendar Opinions

$H_{o3_2}$ : There is no difference in parents' traditional calendar opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school.

Table 10 shows the mean for each school calendar opinions question for year-round and traditional teachers. The means for year-round calendar teachers ranged from 2.28 to 2.89 and the means for traditional calendar teachers ranged from 1.99 to 2.79.

Table 10

*School Calendar Opinions Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Parents*

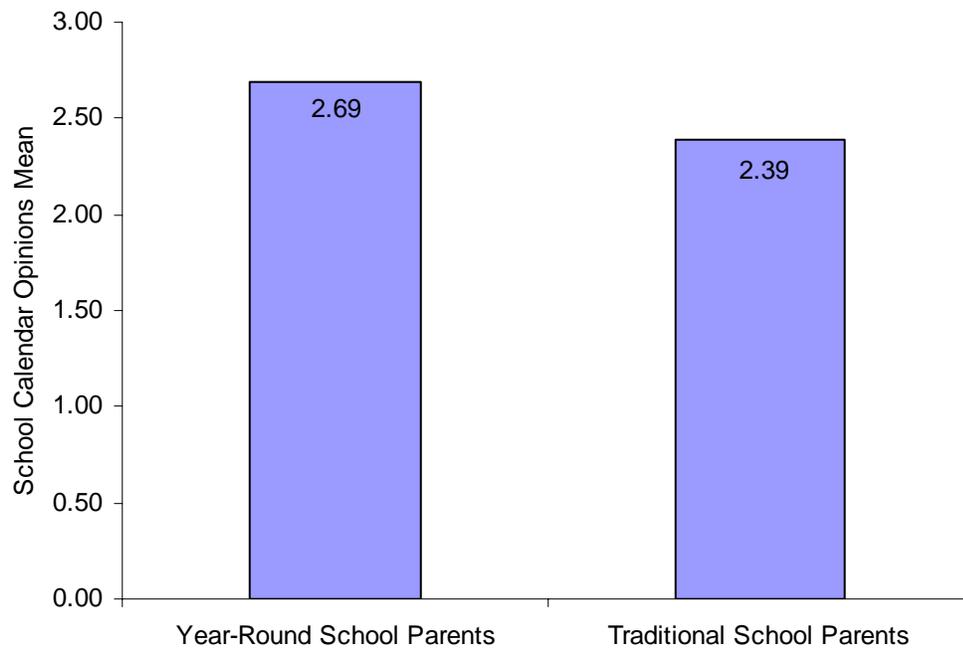
The use of a traditional/year-round school calendar:	Year-Round (N = 64)		Traditional (N = 76)	
	M	SD	M	SD
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	2.89	0.36	2.76	0.49
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	2.67	0.59	2.38	0.65
15. helps students to improve test scores.	2.77	0.50	2.47	0.60
16. makes it difficult to have school sports programs.	2.47	0.67	2.41	0.70
17. increases my child's success.	2.53	0.69	2.53	0.55
18. allows families opportunities for vacations.	2.89	0.40	2.79	0.44
19. presents obstacles for single parents.	2.28	0.70	2.07	0.66
20. allows students to take enrichment classes.	2.77	0.50	2.43	0.55
21. leads to greater retention of learned material.	2.80	0.57	2.26	0.70
22. reduces the amount of time spent in class reviewing.	2.73	0.57	1.99	0.70
23. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	2.41	0.77	2.26	0.77
24. reduces student stress.	2.73	0.48	2.33	0.70

Table 10 (continued)

The use of a traditional/year-round school calendar:	Year-Round ( <i>N</i> = 64)		Traditional ( <i>N</i> = 76)	
	M	SD	M	SD
25. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	2.81	0.50	2.34	0.66
26. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	2.81	0.47	2.30	0.82
27. motivates students to attend school.	2.77	0.46	2.58	0.66

An independent *t* test was conducted to determine whether school calendar opinions of parents whose children attended year-round schools differed from those of parents whose children attended traditional calendar schools. The dependent variable was the school calendar opinions mean score. The *t* test was significant,  $t(138) = 5.25, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_03_2$  was rejected. The mean scores for year-round schools' parents were higher ( $M = 2.69, SD = .34$ ) than were those of traditional schools' parents ( $M = 2.39, SD = .33$ ). Year-round schools' parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to traditional schools' parents. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .41 to .18. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .20$ , was large.

Figure 8 shows the distribution of the parents' school calendar opinions mean scores according to the school type.



*Figure 8. Parents' School Calendar Opinions*

*Research Question #4*

Is there a difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional schools?

Ho4: There is no difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional calendar schools.

Table 11 shows the mean for educators' opinions question for year-round and traditional teachers. The means for year-round calendar teachers ranged from 2.50 to 3.00 and the means for traditional calendar teachers ranged from 1.67 to 2.92.

Table 11

*Educators' Opinions Means for Year-Round and Traditional Calendar Teachers*

Teachers' Responses to Educators' Opinions Questions	Year-Round ( <i>N</i> = 32)		Traditional ( <i>N</i> = 36)	
	M	SD	M	SD
28. I enjoy teaching school.	3.00	0.00	2.92	0.37
29. I feel emotionally drained from my work.	2.50	0.80	1.67	0.68
30. I feel used up at the end of the work day.	2.56	0.56	1.67	0.83
31. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	2.81	0.47	2.36	0.83
32. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.	2.78	0.55	2.75	0.44
33. I feel that I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.	3.00	0.00	2.86	0.35
34. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	3.00	0.00	2.81	0.47
35. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.	2.88	0.34	2.67	0.59
36. I feel burned out from my work.	2.88	0.34	2.36	0.76
37. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	2.97	0.18	2.83	0.38
38. I've become more callous toward people since I began teaching.	2.97	0.18	2.42	0.81
39. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	2.94	0.36	2.67	0.68
40. I feel very energetic.	2.81	0.47	1.97	0.65
41. I feel frustrated by my job.	2.81	0.47	2.19	0.86
42. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	2.66	0.60	2.25	0.81
43. I don't really care what happens to my students.	3.00	0.00	2.97	0.17
44. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	2.94	0.35	2.83	0.38
45. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere for my students.	2.94	0.35	2.44	0.65
46. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.	2.72	0.58	2.36	0.64
47. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	2.88	0.49	2.92	0.28
48. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.	2.97	0.18	2.44	0.81
49. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	2.84	0.37	2.83	0.45
50. I feel students blame me for some of their problems.	2.56	0.72	2.42	0.84

An independent *t* test was conducted to determine whether educators' opinions about their work differed between traditional school teachers and year-round school teachers. The dependent

variable was the educators' opinions mean score. The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(53.78) = 9.74, p < .01$ . Therefore,  $H_04$  was rejected. The mean scores for year-round school teachers were higher ( $M = 2.88, SD = .10$ ) than were those of traditional schools' teachers ( $M = 2.53, SD = .19$ ). Year-round schools' teachers appeared to have more positive opinions compared to traditional schools' teachers. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means between the two groups was from .42 to .27. The effect size,  $\eta^2 = .59$ , was large.

Figure 9 shows the distribution of the educators' opinions mean scores according to the school type.

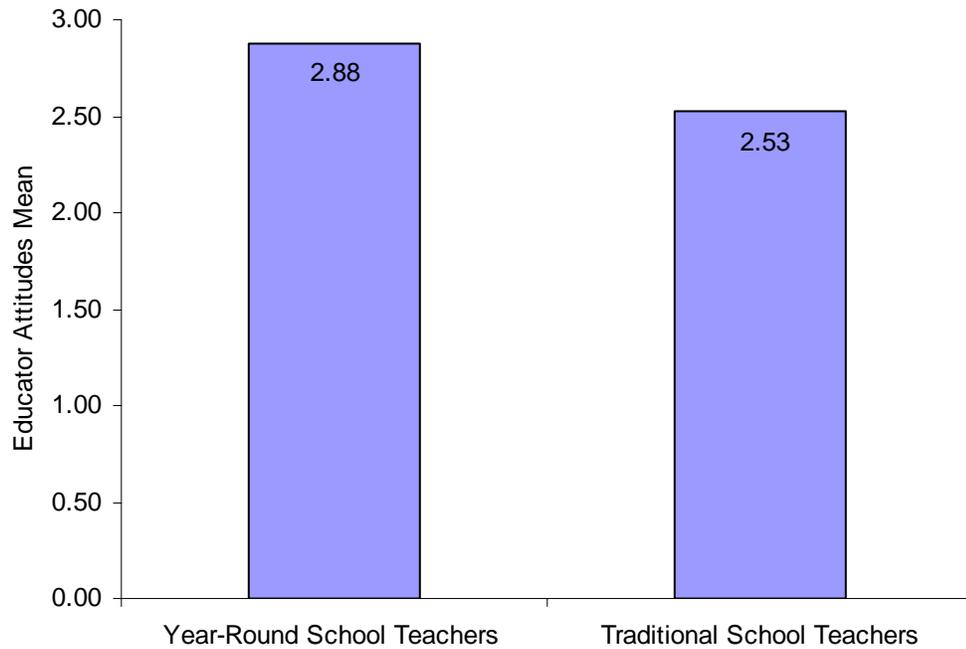


Figure 9. Educators' Opinions

In general, teachers and parents of students who attended year-round schools had more favorable impressions of their school calendar than did teachers and parents of students attending traditional calendar schools; therefore, all of the null hypotheses were rejected.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Summary*

American students have a shorter school year than do those living in 12 of the world's other nations. Students in other information-age countries receive twice as much instructional time as American students do in core academic areas (Kneese & Ballinger, 2008).

This study was conducted to measure and compare the opinions of teachers and parents of children who attend year-round calendar schools to those of teachers and parents of children who attend traditional calendar schools. The survey was conducted twice at the four participating schools because of lack of participation in the first conduction. Parents were randomly selected from two year-round calendar schools and two traditional calendar schools in neighboring counties in East Tennessee.

The survey instruments used were designed to get the opinions of teachers and parents of students in the participating schools. The teacher survey consisted of three sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school opinions about their school's calendar, and opinions about their work environment. The parent survey consisted of two sections: opinions about teaching and learning at their school, and opinions about their children's school calendar. The scale for questions in each section was disagree (1), neutral (2), and agree (3). The responses to questions 16, 19, and 23 on the parent survey and questions 16, 18, 22, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 48, and 50 on the teacher survey were reversed coded. Mean scores were

computed for each section, thus producing a teaching and learning opinions mean score, a school calendar opinions mean score, and educators' opinions mean score.

The population for the survey included teachers and parents of children from two year-round calendar schools in East Tennessee as well as two traditional calendar schools in East Tennessee. The surveys were offered to 426 participants with 208 respondents. The overall participation was 49%; this was considered an adequate number for the purpose of this study.

The study addressed four research questions that were derived from survey results. The four research questions required testing of seven general research hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance. Data were analyzed by using independent  $t$  tests to determine significant differences.

### *Findings*

The findings for this study are discussed to correspond to the four research questions. Each null hypothesis will be repeated then analyzed based upon data.

#### *Research Question #1*

Are there differences in parents' and teachers' combined opinions of academic performances in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in parents' and teachers' combined opinions of the teaching and learning environment at year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools.

The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(206) = 6.67, p < .01$ ; therefore, Ho<sub>1</sub> was rejected. According to findings from this study, teachers and parents of children in year-round calendar schools'

perspectives were significantly higher than were teachers and parents of children attending traditional calendar schools regarding teaching and learning environment.

Ho<sub>12</sub>: There is no difference in school calendar opinions between parents and teachers who participate in year-round schools and those who participate in traditional schools.

The *t* test was significant,  $t(204.32) = 8.63, p < .01$ ; therefore, Ho<sub>12</sub> was rejected. According to findings from this study, opinions about the year-round school calendar for year-round schools' parents and teachers significantly differed from the opinions about the traditional calendar for traditional schools' parents and teachers. Year-round schools' parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to traditional schools' parents and teachers.

### *Research Question #2*

Is there a difference in opinions about teaching and learning for teachers and parents of children who participate in year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools?

Ho<sub>21</sub>: There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between teachers who participate in year-round schools and teachers who participate in traditional schools.

The *t* test was significant,  $t(51.39) = 3.72, p = .01$ . As a result, Ho<sub>21</sub> was rejected. Findings from this study showed that year-round school teachers' opinions about teaching and learning environment at their schools differed significantly from those of traditional school teachers' opinions. Teachers who taught at year-round calendar schools tended to have higher opinions about their teaching and learning environment than did teachers who taught at traditional calendar schools.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no difference in opinions about teaching and learning between parents of children who participate in year-round schools and parents of children who participate in traditional schools.

The *t* test was significant,  $t(138) = 5.66, p < .01$ ; therefore, Ho<sub>2</sub> was rejected. Findings from this study conclude that the teaching and learning opinions of parents of children who attend a year-round school differed significantly from those of whose children attend traditional calendar schools. Parents of children who attend year-round schools tended to have higher opinions about the teaching and learning environment at their schools as compared to the parents of children at schools that followed the traditional calendar.

### *Research Question #3*

Is there a difference in teachers' or parents' opinions in a traditional school calendar as opposed to a year-round school calendar?

Ho<sub>3</sub><sub>1</sub>: There is no difference in teachers' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school.

The *t* test was significant,  $t(55.51) = 8.77, p < .01$ ; therefore, Ho<sub>3</sub><sub>1</sub> was rejected. Findings from this study reflect that teachers' opinions about their school calendar differed between traditional calendar school teachers and year-round calendar school teachers' opinions. Teachers at year-round schools tended to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to teachers at traditional calendar schools.

Ho<sub>3</sub><sub>2</sub>: There is no difference in parents' traditional calendar opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school.

The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(138) = 5.25, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_{03_2}$  was rejected. Findings from this study show that school calendar opinions of parents whose children attended year-round schools differed from those of parents whose children attended traditional calendar schools. Year-round school parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar as compared to traditional school parents.

#### *Research Question #4*

Is there a difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional schools?

$H_{04}$ : There is no difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round calendar schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional calendar schools.

The  $t$  test was significant,  $t(53.78) = 9.74, p < .01$ ; therefore,  $H_{04}$  was rejected. Findings from this study indicate that educators' opinions about their work differed between traditional school teachers and year-round school teachers. Year-round school teachers appeared to have more positive opinions as compared to traditional school teachers.

All four of the participating schools scored well on the 2008 Tennessee state report cards. The report card represents the schools' grades according to the results from the state exam that is given to all third- through eighth-grade students in Tennessee. The grades are given in the following subjects: reading-language arts, math, social studies, and science. Both of the traditional calendar schools performed very well receiving all As. The year-round calendar schools also performed well with one school receiving all As and one school receiving an A in math and Bs in the remaining subjects, thus, proving somewhat that grades are not necessarily affected by the calendar (Tennessee Department of Education, 2009).

Merino (1983) stated, "While year-round schooling may be useful for some things, it has no beneficial or detrimental impact on academics" (p. 302). Most studies indicated no significant differences in academic achievement between traditional and year-round schedules. One researcher concluded that students in year-round schools read fewer books than did traditional schooled children (Campbell, 1994). However, another study conducted by Roby (1995) showed that the students in the year-round schools did better in math and reading than did those students attending schools on a traditional calendar.

O'Neil and Adamson (1993) encouraged the use of year-round schooling as a solution to increases in enrollment. O'Neil and Solomon concluded, "Year-round schooling has not raised test scores, but neither has student achievement suffered. Ultimately converting to year-round school creates many difficulties and shows no clear advantages" (p. 92). As stated by Howell (1988), the only systems benefiting over time were those for whom overcrowding had become a devastating problem.

### *Conclusions*

Results and findings from this study lead to the following conclusions concerning the opinions of teachers and parents of children at year-round calendar schools as opposed to teachers and parents of children at traditional calendar schools.

1. There is a difference in parents' and teachers' perspectives of the teaching and learning environment at year-round schools as opposed to traditional schools.

Questions 1 through 12 on the survey were used to determine any differences. This study determined that teachers who taught at year-round calendar schools tended to

- have more favorable opinions about their teaching and learning environment compared to teachers who taught at traditional calendar schools.
2. There is a difference in school calendar opinions between parents and teachers who participate in year-round schools and those who participate in traditional schools. Questions 13 through 26 on the parent survey were used to determine any differences. This study indicated that year-round school parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to traditional school parents and teachers.
  3. There is a difference in opinions about teaching and learning between teachers who participate in year-round schools and teachers who participate in traditional schools. Questions 1 through 12 on the teacher survey were used to determine any differences. This study determined that teachers who taught at year-round calendar schools tended to have more favorable opinions about their teaching and learning environment compared to teachers who taught at traditional calendar schools.
  4. There is a difference in opinions about teaching and learning between parents of children who participate in year-round schools and parents of children who participate in traditional schools. Questions 1 through 12 on the parent survey were tested to determine any differences. This study determined that parents of children who attend year-round schools tended to have more favorable opinions about the teaching and learning environment at their schools compared to the parents of children at schools who follow the traditional calendar.
  5. There is a difference in teachers' opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school. Questions 13 through 26 on the teacher survey were

- tested to determine any differences. This study determined that teachers at year-round calendar schools tended to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to teachers at traditional calendar schools.
6. There is a difference in parents' traditional calendar opinions in a traditional calendar school as opposed to a year-round calendar school. Questions 13 through 27 on the parent survey were tested to determine any differences. This study determined that year-round calendar school parents appeared to have more favorable opinions about their school calendar compared to traditional calendar school parents.
  7. There is a difference in educators' opinions for teachers who participate in year-round calendar schools as opposed to those who participate in traditional calendar schools. Questions 28 through 50 on the teacher survey were tested to determine any differences. This study determined that teachers who teach at a year-round calendar school appeared to have more positive opinions compared to traditional calendar school teachers.
  8. Teachers who have had experience in both traditional calendar schools and year-round calendar schools tended to favor the year-round calendar schools.

### *Discussion*

It is clear from the results of this study that teachers working in year-round schools and parents who have children who attend year-round schools report viewing their year-round calendar more favorably than do those teachers and parents who use the traditional calendar. Additionally, the results of this study suggest that teachers in these year-round schools generally rate their work environment more favorable than do the teachers who work in traditional

calendar schools; they also have positive opinions and reported finding their work more satisfying.

According to Palmer and Bemis (1999), teachers' attitudes improved with experience in year-round programs. The attitudes measured were about year-round education, school quality, scheduling of personal activities, and morale. Studies comparing a year-round to a traditional calendar indicated that the teachers who were most accepting and positive towards the year-round schedule had the most exposure to it, whereas staff on traditional calendars had the most negative attitudes about it (Palmer & Bemis; Shields, 1996). Costa (1987) found that when teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school took the Elements of Quality survey concerning topics such as management, community confidence in school, and organization of school, they scored higher than did teachers on a traditional calendar in all areas, although not significantly so. Another study focusing on the ease of scheduling personal and family activities showed that teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school expressed significantly higher satisfaction in this area than did traditional calendar teachers (Elsberry, 1992). Finally, when questioned about school climate and effectiveness, teachers who teach in a year-round calendar school had a more positive attitude than did those on a traditional calendar in 15 out of 18 survey questions, although no significance tests were conducted (Palmer & Bemis, 1996).

Although the results from this study show that teachers and parents tend to favor the year-round calendar, there are other thoughts to consider prior to implementing it such as the benefits of the calendar for the school district, any disadvantages, and the many alterations needed prior to employing a year-round calendar. Schools are governed by the clock. School districts across the nation map daily school schedules and yearly school calendars with precision, revealing an obsession with time as a way of organizing and controlling children's educational

experiences (Orellana, 1998). As a consequence, other calendars and schedules have developed around the school calendar.

Consequently, the year-round calendar might not be feasible or appropriate for every school district. When schools go year-round, summer youth camps could begin to suffer as a result of the school building being used. Also, summer businesses might lack the assistance of high-school students who are attending school and those students who would have been employed might miss important employment experiences and opportunities. Many students might miss extracurricular camps because of school (Weaver, 1992a). Advanced placement classes are sometimes cut off in favor of year-round calendars. In addition, multi-track calendars might require additional operating costs, lack sufficient time for maintenance, create extra work for teachers (who might have to change classrooms during the year), lead to overworked clerical staff or parents, and result in some students missing school events scheduled at off-track times (Stenvall, 2000; Worthen & Zsiray, 1994).

In many school districts, all schools are not on the year-round schedule (Warrick-Harris 1995). This may disrupt family vacations when children are on different school calendar schedules. For example, siblings might be on different tracks if one child attends the elementary school and the other child attends the secondary school. Another issue affected by vacation sequences can occur when students participated in extra curricular activities (Cooper et al., 2003). If year-round student teams or clubs compete with traditional calendar schools, they might miss an opportunity to compete in important events or activities (for example: football, track, or debate teams). Secondary students who attended year-round schools could lose the opportunity to be employed full-time during the summer break (Peters, 2002). Students tend to move in and out of jobs with the more frequent breaks. Employers might not be willing to

accommodate or hire students from year-round schools because of their lack of time commitment.

Parents also have concerns with the year-round school calendar. Many parents who have children attending a year-round calendar school have to decide whether to quit their job when the program is adopted in their area, hire someone to watch their children, or reduce their work hours while their children are attending school part time (Gerber, 2008).

Increasing the number of days in the school calendar can also increase costs for the school. Although students might be out longer during their spring break, they return to school in the summer; these are the hottest months of the year. Schools that operate in the summer have to pay higher operating costs because they have to use air conditioning while the students are attending school (Gerber, 2008).

There is also a great deal of work in the transition from a traditional school calendar to a year-round school calendar. Shields and Oberg (2000b) pointed out that when a school district decides to change the traditional school calendar to a year-round calendar there is a significant amount of preparation that must take place. In order for the change to be successful, the district must implement extensive communication, consultation, and planning. According to Shields and Oberg (2000b), substantial and clear communication are necessary among the school's faculty, parents, and community members. The facts of year-round calendars must be presented to each of these groups and they must be allowed the opportunity to discuss the issues. At these meetings, the participants use a question and answer format, thus, allowing for a greater awareness of the advantages and disadvantages between the two types of calendars (Shield & Oberg, 2000b). Community members should be involved in the planning process and able to

make choices regarding the calendar. Teachers, parents, and the community might be more likely to support the new modified calendar because of this inclusion (McGlynn, 2002).

Weaver (1992a) added that before the new calendar could be implemented, the community must have had frequent meetings over a year-long period to discuss any concerns that they might have about the modified calendar. These meetings allow community members time to become better educated about the new calendar. It is important that the calendar and rules of the new schedule be flexible to staff and students so that the calendar change can be a success (Shields & Oberg, 2000b).

Parents and teachers might be hesitant about participating in the year-round calendar. After the 1st year, if these stakeholders are not satisfied with the year-round calendar, they should be permitted to transfer to a traditional school setting that is more appropriate to their needs (Shields & Oberg, 2000b). Shields and Oberg (2000b) found that the majority of teachers and students were happy with their decision. As a result, this type of school calendar has become a popular trend in communities and across the United States. Some other successful implementation ideas were:

1. involve all local education stakeholders in the decision-making process (Serifs, 1990, p. 9);
2. keep them informed throughout the process to minimize conflict (Serifs, p. 9); and
3. schedule small informational meetings with parents, school staff, and the community rather than large community meetings in the beginning. (Ballinger, 1995, p. 29)

Serifs (1990) suggested the following components be considered before implementation of a year-round school calendar:

1. configuration of the calendar; will it be 45 or 60 days of attendance and 15 days of vacation, or something else?;
2. number of student tracks that will work best;
3. number of holidays during the school year;
4. unique needs of the school and community;
5. provision of ample time for staff development;
6. recognition that the year-round schedule will require many changes;
7. prepare to address curricula concerns such as sequencing and continuity, and student remediation and enrichment; and
8. do not rush implementation and do not make any hasty evaluations. Accurate assessment of the program will take time. (pp. 11-12)

In addition, Ballinger (1995, 1998) added the following suggestions:

1. continue professional development regularly about year-round education, its purposes, its possibilities, its record, its relationship to learning theories and its flexibility (1995, p. 30);
2. understand that it is impossible to develop a perfect calendar for all. With growing diversity in family lifestyles and student learning needs, it is imperative that districts provide to the greatest degree possible, within financial and administrative constraints, optional calendars for students' varied learning needs (1995, p. 30); and
3. understand that year-round education is a very broad field, with a large number of ways to offer it to parents and students. Staff, parents and community who are well grounded in the rationale for year-round education will rarely wish to return to traditional schedule. (1998, p. 660)

Year-round schooling does appear very appealing to parents and teachers in this particular study. All of the research questions showed that parents with children who attend year-round schools and teachers significantly favored the year-round calendar. However, there are important factors that must be considered prior to implementing a year-round school calendar.

#### *Recommendations for Practice*

In this study there were conclusive data to recommend year-round calendars for schools. The results implied that both parents and teachers of students who attended year-round calendar schools had more favorable opinions about the year-round school calendar than parents and teachers of students who attended traditional calendar schools had toward the traditional school calendar. School officials and policy makers could use the information obtained from this study when considering school calendar implementation. However, prior to making this decision, school officials and policy makers should also consider gathering opinions from parents and teachers of high school students as well as middle school students.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Future studies are recommended to garner further feedback on the effectiveness of school calendars.

1. A comparative study should be conducted as to teachers' opinions versus students' opinions regarding year-round education.
2. A comparative study should be conducted including students who attend year-round calendar schools versus traditional calendar schools pertaining to the scores on *Terra Nova* or other standardized testing scores .

3. A national study focused on opinions of teachers and students in year-round calendar schools and traditional calendar schools should be conducted.
4. A postgraduate study should be conducted comparing academic progress of students who have attended year-round calendar schools to the academic progress of students who have attended traditional calendar schools after the 1st year in college.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### Letters to Directors of Schools

Dr. Jack Parton  
Director of Schools  
Sevier County School District  
Sevierville, TN 37862

Dear:

I am a doctoral student at East Tennessee State University, I am interested in conducting a study within your school system to determine if there is a difference in teachers' and parents' opinions in schools with traditional calendars as opposed to schools with year-round calendars. I would like to survey third and fourth grade teachers and parents at both Pi Beta Phi Elementary and Seymour Intermediate.

The survey will be anonymous and will be ensured confidentiality of all participants.

I am requesting your permission to conduct this study within the County school system and will provide your office and the participating schools with copies of the finished report. This should be helpful in providing information that could benefit the district and assist others.

Please feel free to contact my doctoral advisor (Dr. Eric Glover) or myself if you have any further question concerning my study.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Y. Rule  
Doctoral Student  
East Tennessee State University

Mr. Tom Shamblin  
Director of Schools  
Alcoa City School District  
Alcoa, TN

Dear :

I am a doctoral student at East Tennessee State University, I am interested in conducting a study within your school system to determine if there is a difference in teachers' and parents' opinions in schools with traditional calendars as opposed to schools with year-round calendars. I would like to survey third and fourth grade teachers and parents at Alcoa City Elementary School.

The survey will be anonymous and will be ensured confidentiality of all participants.

I am requesting your permission to conduct this study within the County school system and will provide your office and the participating schools with copies of the finished report. This should be helpful in providing information that could benefit the district and assist others.

Please feel free to contact my doctoral advisor (Dr. Eric Glover) or myself if you have any further question concerning my study.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Y. Rule  
Doctoral Student  
East Tennessee State University

Ms. Stephanie Thompson  
Director of Schools  
Maryville City School District  
Maryville, TN

Dear :

I am a doctoral student at East Tennessee State University, I am interested in conducting a study within your school system to determine if there is a difference in teachers' and parents' opinions in schools with traditional calendars as opposed to schools with year-round calendars. I would like to survey third and fourth grade teachers and parents at Fort Craig Elementary.

The survey will be anonymous and will be ensured confidentiality of all participants.

I am requesting your permission to conduct this study within the County school system and will provide your office and the participating schools with copies of the finished report. This should be helpful in providing information that could benefit the district and assist others.

Please feel free to contact my doctoral advisor (Dr. Eric Glover) or myself if you have any further question concerning my study.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Y. Rule  
Doctoral Student  
East Tennessee State University

APPENDIX B

Letter to Principals

To Whom It May Concern:

Jennifer Y. Rule is granted permission to conduct a survey with the grade teachers and parents regarding our school calendar. The surveys will be completed on a voluntary basis.

Sincerely,

## APPENDIX C

### Survey for Teachers in Schools Using a Traditional Calendar

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: This survey has been designed to assess teachers opinions about the elements of the teaching-learning environment within your school. Please complete each of the sections on the questionnaire.

Please indicate how long you have taught at this school:

0-5 years\_\_ 6-10 years\_\_\_\_ 11-20 years\_\_\_\_ 21-30 years\_\_\_\_ more than 30 years\_\_\_\_\_

I have had experience teaching in a school with a year-round calendar: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If yes, which calendar do you prefer? Year Round \_\_\_\_ Traditional \_\_\_\_

#### **Part I. Student Achievement**

*Use the following scale in responding to questions 1 through 12: **SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree (please circle one response).*

Statement	Scale		
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	A	N	D
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	A	N	D
3. Learning at this school is fun.	A	N	D
4. Students respect others who get good grades.	A	N	D
5. Students seek extra work to receive good grades.	A	N	D
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively.	A	N	D
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	A	N	D
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	A	N	D
9. I am proud to teach at this school.	A	N	D
10. Students improve on previous work.	A	N	D
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	A	N	D
12. Instructors at this school are preparing students for the future.	A	N	D

**Part II. Teachers' Opinions**

Use the following scale to indicate your response to questions 13 through 26:

**SD** = *Strongly Disagree*, **D** = *Disagree*, **A** = *Agree*, **SA** = *Strongly Agree*

***Schools using a traditional school calendar:***

Statement	Scale		
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	A	N	D
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	A	N	D
15. helps students to improve test scores.	A	N	D
16. makes it difficult to have a school sports program.	A	N	D
17. allows families opportunities to take vacations.	A	N	D
18. presents obstacles for single parents.	A	N	D
19. allows students to take enrichment classes.	A	N	D
20. leads to greater retention of learned material.	A	N	D
21. reduces the amount of time spent in class review.	A	N	D
22. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	A	N	D
23. reduces student stress.	A	N	D
24. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	A	N	D
25. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	A	N	D
26. motivates students to attend school.	A	N	D

27. Please list any comments that you may have about teaching in a school using a traditional school calendar.

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### Part III. Educator Survey

Please respond to questions 28-50 using the following scale: **SD** = *Strongly Disagree*, **D** = *Disagree*, **A** = *Agree*, **SA** = *Strongly Agree*

Statement	Scale		
28. I enjoy teaching school.	A	N	D
29. I feel emotionally drained from my work.	A	N	D
30. I feel used up at the end of the work day.	A	N	D
31. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	A	N	D
32. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.	A	N	D
33. I feel that I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.	A	N	D
34. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	A	N	D
35. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.	A	N	D
36. I feel burned out from my work.	A	N	D
37. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	A	N	D
38. I've become more callous toward people since I began teaching.	A	N	D
39. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	A	N	D
40. I feel very energetic.	A	N	D
41. I feel frustrated by my job.	A	N	D
42. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	A	N	D
43. I don't really care what happens to my students.	A	N	D
44. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	A	N	D
45. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere for my students.	A	N	D

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| 46. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students. | A | N | D |
| 47. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.    | A | N | D |
| 48. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.                     | A | N | D |
| 49. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.    | A | N | D |
| 50. I feel students blame me for some of their problems.       | A | N | D |

APPENDIX D

Survey for Teachers in Schools Using a Year-Round School Calendar

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: This survey has been designed to assess teachers opinions about the elements of the teaching-learning environment within your school. Please complete each of the sections on the questionnaire.

Please indicate how long you have taught at this school:

0-5 years\_\_ 6-10 years\_\_\_\_ 11-20 years\_\_\_\_ 21-30 years\_\_\_\_ more than 30 years\_\_\_\_\_

I have had experience teaching in a school with a traditional calendar: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If yes, which calendar do you prefer? Year Round \_\_\_\_ Traditional \_\_\_\_

**Part I. Student Achievement**

Use the following scale in responding to questions 1 through 12: **A= Agree, N = Neutral, D= Disagree**

(please circle one response).

Statement	Scale		
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	A	N	D
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	A	N	D
3. Learning at this school is fun.	A	N	D
4. Students respect others who get good grades.	A	N	D
5. Students seek extra work to receive good grades.	A	N	D
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively.	A	N	D
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	A	N	D
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	A	N	D
9. I am proud to teach at this school.	A	N	D
10. Students improve on previous work.	A	N	D
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	A	N	D
12. Instructors at this school are preparing students for the future.	A	N	D

**Part II. Teachers' Opinions**

Use the following scale to indicate your response to questions 13 through 26:

**A= Agree, N = Neutral, D= Disagree**

*Schools using a year-round school calendar:*

Statement	Scale		
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	A	N	D
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	A	N	D
15. helps students to improve test scores.	A	N	D
16. makes it difficult to have a school sports program.	A	N	D
17. allows families opportunities to take vacations.	A	N	D
18. presents obstacles for single parents.	A	N	D
19. allows students to take enrichment classes.	A	N	D
20. leads to greater retention of learned material.	A	N	D
21. reduces the amount of time spent in class review.	A	N	D
22. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	A	N	D
23. reduces student stress.	A	N	D
24. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	A	N	D
25. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	A	N	D
26. motivates students to attend school.	A	N	D

27. Please list any comments that you may have about teaching in a school using a year-round school calendar.

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### Part III. Educator Survey

Please respond to questions 28-50 using the following scale: **A= Agree, N = Neutral, D= Disagree**

Statement	Scale		
28. I enjoy teaching school.	A	N	D
29. I feel emotionally drained from my work.	A	N	D
30. I feel used up at the end of the work day.	A	N	D
31. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	A	N	D
32. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.	A	N	D
33. I feel that I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.	A	N	D
34. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	A	N	D
35. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.	A	N	D
36. I feel burned out from my work.	A	N	D
37. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	A	N	D
38. I've become more callous toward people since I began teaching.	A	N	D
39. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	A	N	D
40. I feel very energetic.	A	N	D
41. I feel frustrated by my job.	A	N	D
42. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	A	N	D
43. I don't really care what happens to my students.	A	N	D
44. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	A	N	D

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| 45. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere for my students.  | A | N | D |
| 46. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students. | A | N | D |
| 47. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.    | A | N | D |
| 48. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.                     | A | N | D |
| 49. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.    | A | N | D |
| 50. I feel students blame me for some of their problems.       | A | N | D |

APPENDIX E

Parents' Survey

Date

Directions: This survey has been designed to assess parents' opinions about the teaching-learning environment at your child's school. Please complete each section of this questionnaire. Upon completing this survey, please return it to your child's teacher. Please do not identify yourself on the questionnaire.

Please indicate the grade your child is currently in:

\_\_\_\_\_ Third                  \_\_\_\_\_ Fourth

**Part I: Beliefs About Teaching and Learning in Your Child's School**

*Use the following scale in responding to statements 1 through 12: **SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree*

*(please circle one response per question).*

Statement	Scale		
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	A	N	D
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	A	N	D
3. Learning at this school is fun.	A	N	D
4. Students respect others who receive good grades.	A	N	D
5. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	A	N	D
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively	A	N	D
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	A	N	D
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	A	N	D
9. I am proud to be a parent of a child in this school.	A	N	D
10. Students try hard to improve on previous work.	A	N	D
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	A	N	D
12. Instructions at this school is preparing students for the future.	A	N	D

**Part II. Parents' Opinion of the Traditional Schooling**

Use the following scale in responding to statements 13 through 27: **SD** = *Strongly Disagree*, **D** = *Disagree*, **A** = *Agree*, **SA** = *Strongly Agree*.

***The use of a traditional school calendar:***

Statement	Scale		
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	A	N	D
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	A	N	D
15. helps students to improve test scores.	A	N	D
16. makes it difficult to have school sports programs.	A	N	D
17. increases my child's success.	A	N	D
18. allows families opportunities for vacations.	A	N	D
19. presents obstacles for single parents.	A	N	D
20. allows students to take enrichment classes.	A	N	D
21. leads to greater retention of learned material.	A	N	D
22. reduces the amount of time spent in class reviewing.	A	N	D
23. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	A	N	D
24. reduces student stress.	A	N	D
25. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	A	N	D
26. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	A	N	D
27. motivates students to attend school.	A	N	D
28. Please list any comments that you may have about schools with traditional calendars:			
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APPENDIX F

Parents' Survey

Date:

Directions: This survey has been designed to assess parents' opinions about the teaching-learning environment at your child's school. Please complete each section of this questionnaire. Upon completing this survey, please return it to your child's teacher. Please do not identify yourself on the questionnaire.

Please indicate the grade your child is currently in:

\_\_\_\_\_ Third      \_\_\_\_\_ Fourth

**Part I: Beliefs About Teaching and Learning in Your Child's School**

Use the following scale in responding to statements 1 through 12: **A= Agree, N = Neutral, D= Disagree**

*(please circle one response per question).*

Statement	Scale		
1. The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	A	N	D
2. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	A	N	D
3. Learning at this school is fun.	A	N	D
4. Students respect others who receive good grades.	A	N	D
5. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	A	N	D
6. This school has an atmosphere in which students learn effectively	A	N	D
7. Teachers at this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	A	N	D
8. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	A	N	D
9. I am proud to be a parent of a child in this school.	A	N	D
10. Students try hard to improve on previous work.	A	N	D
11. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	A	N	D
12. Instructions at this school is preparing students for the future.	A	N	D

**Part II. Parents' Opinion of the year-round Schooling**

Use the following scale in responding to statements 13 through 27: **A= Agree, N = Neutral, D= Disagree**

***The use of a year-round school calendar:***

Statement	Scale		
13. promotes effective teaching and learning.	A	N	D
14. enables students to overcome learning problems.	A	N	D
15. helps students to improve test scores.	A	N	D
16. makes it difficult to have school sports programs.	A	N	D
17. increases my child's success.	A	N	D
18. allows families opportunities for vacations.	A	N	D
19. presents obstacles for single parents.	A	N	D
20. allows students to take enrichment classes.	A	N	D
21. leads to greater retention of learned material.	A	N	D
22. reduces the amount of time spent in class reviewing.	A	N	D
23. reduces opportunities to participate in other activities.	A	N	D
24. reduces student stress.	A	N	D
25. is based on information about how students learn most effectively.	A	N	D
26. keeps students engaged in learning during the entire year.	A	N	D
27. motivates students to attend school.	A	N	D

28. Please list any comments that you may have about schools with year-round calendars:

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APPENDIX G

Informed Consent Form (Parents)

Dear Parent,

You are being asked to take part in a research study to discover your perceptions/opinions of your current school calendar. You will be asked to complete a survey answering questions about the school calendar. The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and will be in the privacy of your own home and returned to the designated proctor. This research will be important in discovering whether year-round or traditional school calendars are perceived by teachers and parents as more/less beneficial in school scheduling.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to you. The survey has been designed to protect your privacy. You will not put your name on the survey. Also, no school or teacher will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer. In addition, you may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

If you have any questions, problems or research-related problems at any time, you may call Jennifer Rule at 865/428-2843 or e-mail [jenniferrule@sevier.org](mailto:jenniferrule@sevier.org), or Dr. Eric Glover at 423/439-7566. You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 423/439-6054 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research participant. If you have any questions or concerns about the research and want to talk to someone independent of the research team or you can't reach the study staff, you may call an IRB Coordinator at 423/439-6055 or 423/439-6002.

Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the researcher's residence for at least 5 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, ETSU IRB, and personnel particular to this research have access to the study records. Your records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

If you have questions today about the survey, your proctor or principal should be able to answer them. If you are not willing to take part in the survey, simply return the survey unanswered or dispose of it.

Your participation is very important to the success of this study, and we certainly appreciate your help.

**Permission for Parent Participation**

I have read or had this document read to me and know what the survey is about. I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any time without any consequences or explanation and I am free to ask questions at any time, without penalty.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please print your name



## APPENDIX H

### Informed Consent Form (Teachers)

Dear Teacher,

You are being asked to take part in a research study to discover your perceptions/opinions of your current school calendar. You will be asked to complete a survey answering questions about the school calendar. The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and will be in school and returned to the designated proctor. This research will be important in discovering whether year-round or traditional school calendars are perceived by teachers and parents as more/less beneficial in school scheduling.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to you. The survey has been designed to protect your privacy. You will not put your name on the survey. Also, no school or teacher will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer. In addition, you may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

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Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the researcher's residence for at least 5 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, ETSU IRB, and personnel particular to this research have access to the study records. Your records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

If you have questions today about the survey, your proctor or principal should be able to answer them. If you are not willing to take part in the survey, simply return the survey unanswered or dispose of it.

Your participation is very important to the success of this study, and we certainly appreciate your help.

Version date 4/14/07

## APPENDIX I

### Parent Research Study Explanation

Dear Third or Fourth Grade Parent,

You are being asked to take part in a research study to determine the perceptions and opinions of teachers and parents on the school calendar. You will be asked to complete a survey answering questions about your perception of the current school calendar. The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and will be in the privacy of your home and returned to the designated proctor. This research will be important in discovering whether year-round or traditional school calendars are perceived by teachers and parents as more/less beneficial in school scheduling.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to you. The survey has been designed to protect your privacy. You will not put your name on the survey. Also, no school or teacher will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer. In addition, you may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

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Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the researcher's residence for at least 5 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, ETSU IRB, and personnel particular to this research have access to the study records. Your records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

If you have questions today about the survey, your proctor or principal should be able to answer them. If you are not willing to take part in the survey, simply return the survey unanswered or dispose of it.

Your participation is very important to the success of this study, and we certainly appreciate your help.

## APPENDIX J

### Teacher Research Study Explanation

Dear Teacher,

You are being asked to take part in a study to determine the perceptions and opinions of teachers and parents on the school calendar. You will be asked to complete a survey answering questions about your perception of the current school calendar. The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and will be at school and returned to the designated proctor. This research will be important in discovering whether year-round or traditional school calendars are perceived by teachers and parents as more/less beneficial in school scheduling.

Completing this anonymous survey will cause little or no risk to you. The survey has been designed to protect your privacy. You will not put your name on the survey. Also, no school or teacher will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer. In addition, you may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

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Your participation is very important to the success of this study, and we certainly appreciate your help.

VITA

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