

Innovative School Calendar: Outcomes Evaluation 2022–2023

Recommendation 1: Revisit the Innovative School Calendar (ISC) program elements as recommended in Year-1 evaluation report. Drawing on the research literature, determine what concrete changes are needed to ensure that the additional school time is both sufficient and well-spent. That may involve incorporating new evidence-based interventions into the school day and year, building in time for increased teacher planning, collaboration, and professional development, and establishing additional student enrichment activities.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<p>Collaborate with the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs to develop specific guidance on delivering the various curricula and related professional learning during the summer learning months.</p> <p><i>This includes the reading and math curricula, PLTW modules, and Mindfulness programming. Staff reported little professional learning or support for Implementation during the additional thirty days.</i></p> <p>The ISC Planning Implementation Team was created in 2018 to collaborate and apply our expertise to jointly develop innovative instructional programs and structures for an extended calendar year for Arcola and Roscoe Nix elementary schools. The planning and implementation team met monthly to strategize, discuss, and work on various ISCs and programming projects.</p> <p>The ISC Central Office Coordination Committee was established in 2022 to meet the unique needs of operating an innovative school calendar. The committee aims to collaborate and apply our expertise to support Arcola and Roscoe Nix elementary schools proactively. During the ISC</p>	Partially Implemented	4/30/2024

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	<p>Central Office Coordination Committee meetings, we discuss the current operational support(s) ISC schools need.</p> <p>In 2023, an ISC professional development learning timeline was developed to provide Innovative schools administrators and staff with information about systemwide professional learning and to specify the required staff training for the FY 2024 school year.</p> <p>More coordination, integration, and connection among MCPS curriculum offices are needed to provide professional development opportunities throughout the ISC year. </p>		
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<p>Concur</p>	<p>Move up timelines for staffing and recruitment procedures at the ISC schools.</p> <p><i>This includes distribution of staffing allocations, teacher preference form distribution, deadline for teacher’s opportunity to switch schools, distribution of the next year’s calendar, and finalized union agreements.</i></p> <p>Moving the timeline for staffing and recruitment procedures at the Innovative Calendar Schools created a recruitment opportunity to attract a larger pool of candidates. While the timeline has been adjusted to provide an efficient and effective recruitment process, Innovative Calendar schools are still left with vacant positions.</p> <p>Since 2019, the ISC creation has been based upon input from ISC stakeholders (Ad Hoc Committee, families, staff, and community members). The calendar approval process is aligned with the traditional school calendar. The ISC is dependent on the start date of the traditional school calendar.</p> <p>From 2020, staffing allocations have been made available to all MCPS schools in February. However, ISC schools were afforded the opportunity to interview and hire earlier than other schools within the district. Teacher and paraeducator preference forms have been distributed on a yearly basis. This form gives Innovative Calendar School staff the opportunity to share feedback about their assignment for the upcoming school year. ISC teachers can opt out of that school assignment for the following year.</p> <p>A memorandum of understanding for the ISC was approved on June 23, 2021, for school years 2021 through 2023.</p>	<p>Implemented</p>	
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<p>Concur</p>	<p>Develop a PLTW observation tool to assess the quality of implementation in the elementary classroom as well as the impact of PLTW instruction on student outcomes in the classroom.</p> <p><i>This would provide a common set of guidelines and expectations for implementation of PLTW modules in the elementary classroom. It would also provide a useful way to collect information for continuous improvement. The PDT coaches, PLTW team members, and staff from the MCPS Office of Science, Technology, and Engineering should collaborate to develop the tool.</i></p> <p>Since 2019, the PreK–12 science office has provided a scope and sequence for Next Generation Science Standards and Project Lead the Way Launch that aligns with the Project Lead the Way modules. The modules are intended to support teachers as they plan to teach the MCPS science curriculum and Project Lead the Way Launch modules (units).</p> <p>In 2019, Primary Talent Development* coaches, Accelerated Enriched Instruction Office, and Title I instructional specialists identified how Primary Talent Development learning behaviors (Perceptive, Communicative, Inquisitive, Persistent, Creative, Resourceful, Leadership) aligned with Project Lead the Way Launch modules. These tasks were integrated with the learning behaviors and essential strategies so that student portfolios could document student performance within the Project Lead the Way Launch modules.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	<p>12/22/2023</p>
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	<p>The Innovative School Calendar sites fully implement at least three modules per grade level. From 2020, during the first 30 days of school, the Primary Talent Development and Project Lead the Way Launch coaches deliver teacher training collaboratively to onboard new staff to Project Lead the Way Launch.</p> <p>The Division of Early Childhood, Title I Programs and Refunds Funds, and the PreK - 12 Science offices will collaboratively create the Project Lead the Way Launch observation tool by December 2023.</p> <p><i>*The PTD program uses a science-based curriculum that engages K - 2 students in open-ended, hands-on, problem-solving experiences that promote creative and critical thinking skills.</i></p>		
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<p>Disagree</p>	<p>Provide staff larger blocks of time off, particularly in the first quarter and at the end of the school year.</p> <p><i>Staff feedback on the pacing of the initiative and multiple professional learning requirements indicates an increase in teacher fatigue. This also aligns with research on extended school year calendar models.</i></p> <p>In 2023, the ISC allows for approximately three weeks of non-instructional time for staff before the start of the new school year and about two weeks before the beginning of the traditional school calendar year.</p> <p>ISC staff has requested that MCPS consider using asynchronous instructional days as an alternative to help alleviate teacher fatigue.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p>	
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	<p>Create an Innovation Coordinator to support current Innovative School Calendar sites.</p>		
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Recommendation 2: Based on findings from academic examinations, at this time, expanding ISC should not be undertaken.

Opinion	Responsive Action Plan (Provide Narrative Response)	Status of Responsive Action	Estimated Date of Full Implementation of Responsive Action
Concur	<p>Revisit student achievement data to assess the impact of an additional 30 days of instruction on student performance in reading and math.</p> <p><i>The interruption to in-person learning impacted the collection of assessment data and led to decreases in student scores across the school system for all student groups.</i></p> <p>The Innovative School Calendar Evaluation 2022–2023 results indicated that despite a five-and-a-half week of additional instruction, the ISC did not affect student reading and mathematics performance by year-end.</p> <p>Despite monthly central office coordination committee meetings to address the unique needs of the ISC, MCPS has yet to build out operational supports that will promptly respond to the ISC sites in a manner that sustains a high-quality learning environment.</p> <p>School operations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Food and Nutrition Services • Emergency closing during the additional days of instruction 	Implemented	

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	<p>Despite multiple community outreach methods to inform the community of the first day of the Innovative School Calendar, both sites experience ongoing attendance challenges during the first 30 days of school. </p>		
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