



RESTAURANT, LODGING, RESORT AND
CAMPGROUND ASSOCIATIONS

Support the Law Requiring Public School Classes to Begin After Labor Day

POSITION: Hospitality Minnesota recognizes traditional summer and strongly opposes legislation that would repeal the post- Labor Day school start law. Schools in Minnesota have traditionally commenced their academic year after Labor Day. In recent years, some school districts have made a push to start in early to mid-August in the name of preparation for mandatory standardized tests. We are strong supporters of a quality education system in Minnesota; we also believe that the post-Labor Day school start and positive educational outcomes are fully compatible. We also support amending the current law to require that sports programs and any other extracurricular activities begin required activities after Labor Day.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS:

▪ **We are strong supporters of a quality education system in Minnesota and see ourselves as partners with education. We also believe the post-Labor Day school start and positive educational outcomes are fully compatible and the evidence supports our belief.**

- Four years ago, several local school districts in Southwest Minnesota were granted an early start and districts are beginning to report no noticeable changes in test scores. A number of these schools have gone back to a traditional calendar.
- Citing no improvements in student academic outcomes and minimal cost savings, Minneapolis Public Schools announced in November 2018 the return to resuming classes after Labor Day.

▪ **A 2012 study by the University of Minnesota Center for Tourism found a strong correlation between school starts and family vacations.**

- The post-Labor Day school start increases the likelihood families report at least one trip of two or more nights away from home in the month of August or September by 50%.
- The likelihood of reporting such a trip in any month between (and including) May and September is 30% higher as a result of schools starting after Labor Day.

▪ In response to a 2012 Minnesota Center for Survey Research poll, 75.6% of respondents said that kindergarten through 12th grade classes should start after Labor Day.

- Many statewide industries value the employees that are available as a result of the current school start law. Such industries include tourism, canning, 4-H, the State Fair, landscaping, retail, and farming. The current law is also a great benefit to students, giving many young people extra opportunities to earn money that is needed for college or to help supplement their family income.
- Some will say that school boards cannot work with the current calendar. From Labor Day to the second week of June there are 41 weeks or 287 days. If you take out the weekend days (82), you are left with 205 weekdays to work with, minus the 184 days averaged by the state's schools. This leaves 21 extra days, or four full school weeks of days off.
- Numerous school districts begin sports practices and other extracurricular activities in mid-August. This makes it difficult for hospitality businesses to maintain their staffing and for families to schedule vacations.
- If it is deemed necessary to increase the amount of time a student is in school, we would suggest lengthening the number of school hours (many schools now end their days by 2:00 p.m.) and eliminating some of the break periods throughout the year.
- Nearly every school district benefits from tourism businesses, which pay property taxes. A negative impact on these businesses may have serious consequences on school district budgets.
- The post-Labor Day start law dramatically impacts Minnesota's economy. Without question, the law positively lengthens the tourism season statewide. Additional revenue means additional dollars for education and other key social programs.