

# Tri-District Calendar Survey Results

Jake Lehrhoff (on behalf of Calendar Review Subcommittee)  
Oct 29 2025

# Methodology

**Timing:** September 26–October 14th, 18 days

**Communication:** shared through official school channels in each district

**Accessibility:** available in 9 languages

**Participation:** 1912 responses

## LPS/SPS/LSRHS Calendar Survey

The School Committees for Lincoln Public Schools (LPS), Sudbury Public Schools (SPS), and Lincoln–Sudbury Regional High School (LSRHS) are reviewing the school calendar for the 2026-2027 school year and beyond, specifically how religious and cultural observances are addressed.

**Estimated time to complete this survey:** ~7 minutes

### Purpose

This survey is one of several ways our school committees are gathering feedback from staff, families, and community members. We are currently considering four approaches:

1. **Keep the current calendar without any changes** (keep state and federal holidays, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday (½ day in LPS) as school holidays and do not add the proposed new holidays).
2. **Add closures for Diwali, Lunar New Year, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha** (school year may be extended by up to 4 days)
3. **Observe only state and federal holidays** (remove Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday; school year may be shortened by 3 days).
4. **Rotate a limited number of non-state and federal holidays** (from a pool including Diwali, Lunar New Year, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Good Friday). For example, year 1 may include no-school days for 2-3 of those holidays, year 2 may include no-school days for 2-3 other holidays.

Your input will help us balance multiple factors, including the religious and cultural traditions across our community, childcare needs on no-school days, impact on summer break length, instructional continuity, and contractual and cost implications.

### Confidentiality & Reporting

Responses are **anonymous**. Results will be reported **in aggregate** (totals/percentages). We may share summaries by broad groups (e.g., Families, Staff, Community), and to protect privacy, we will **not report small subgroups**.

### Key Notes for All Respondents

# Methodology (cont'd)

## **Sample reliability**

- It isn't knowable if the opinions of the survey participants generalize to the population
- One way to understand that potential variance is to run statistical tests, to establish whether any differences across distributions are significant
- This study didn't run those tests, so the results should be interpreted as descriptive, not definitive

## **Response limits**

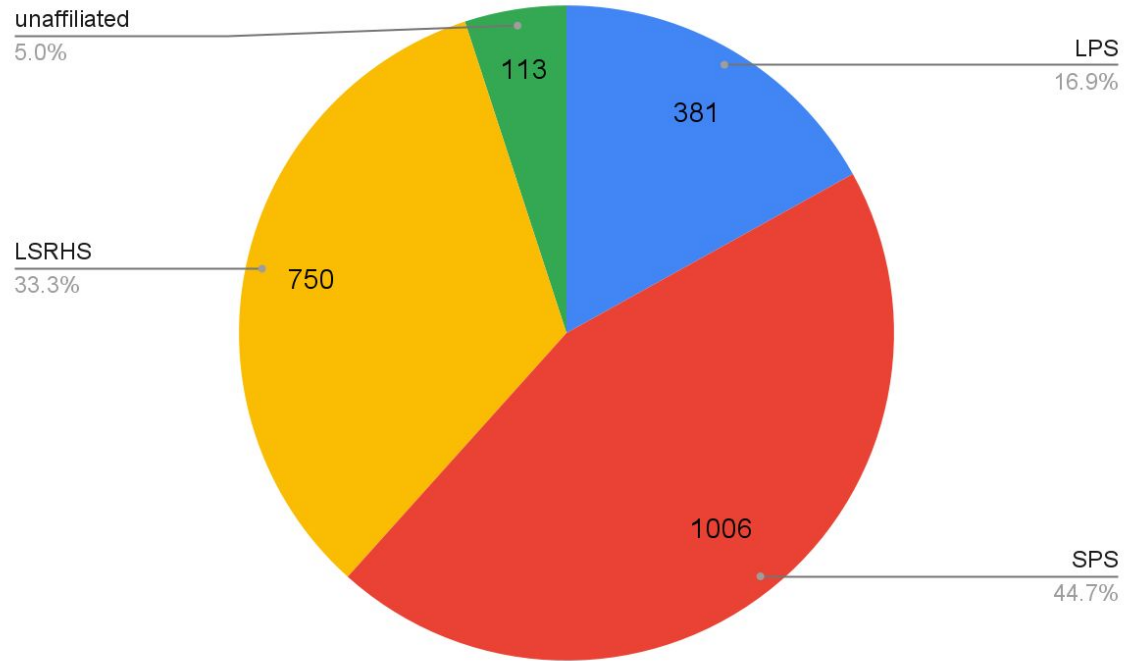
- Participants could only respond once per email
- Results weren't weighted by number of students in the family
- Staff with students in the district could respond to both staff and family questions

# **Survey Participation**

# Who took the survey? School

Significant portions of each district participated

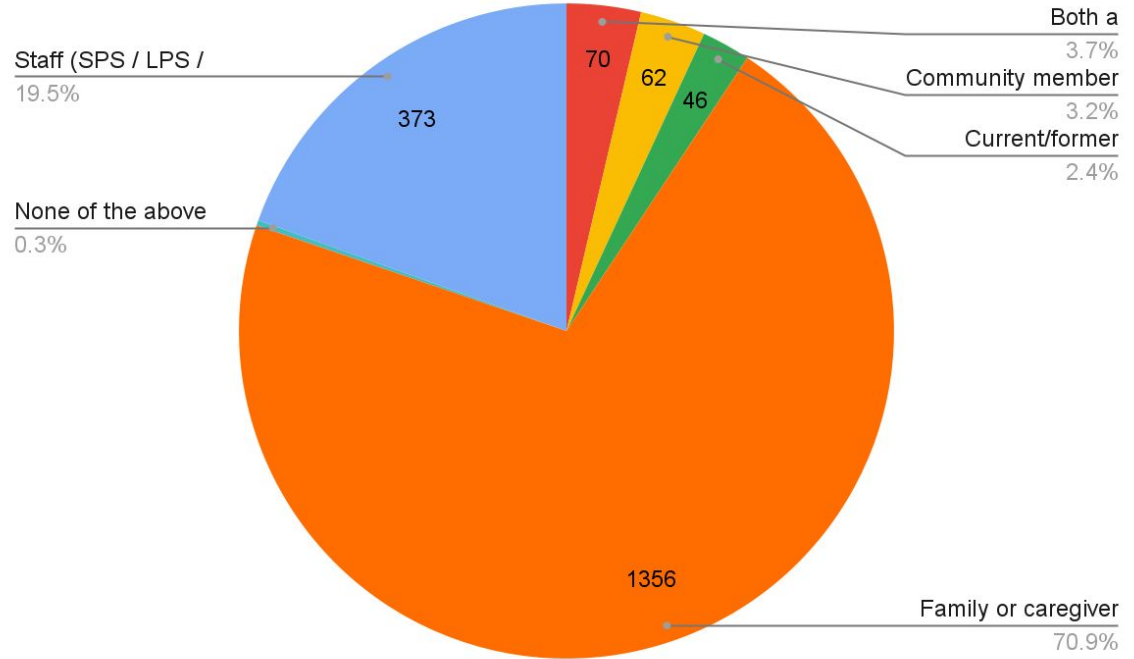
Note: participants were able to select more than one school



# Who took the survey? Role

Family/caregiver represented the majority of respondents

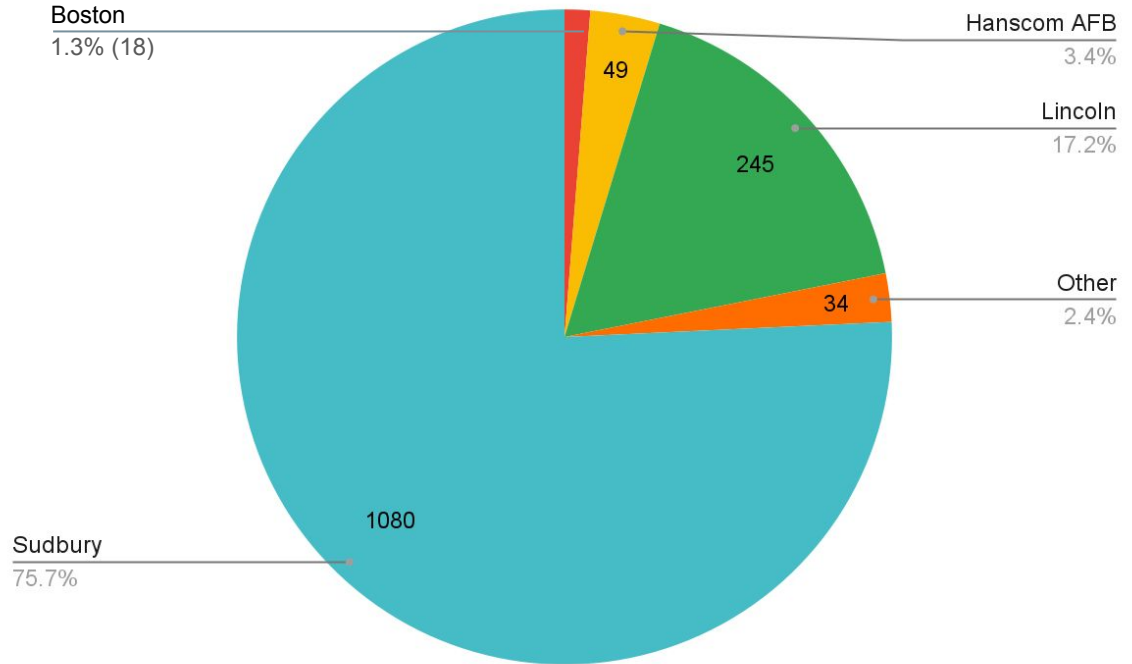
As expected, some community members and current/former students participated



# Who took the survey? Residence

Low participation in Boston and Hanscom means generalizing from that data isn't advisable

Note: "Other" represents staff that live out of district



# Expected Attendance **Family/caregiver**

“If school were in session on the following holidays, how would this affect attendance for your child/children?”



# Critical question

(for administration)

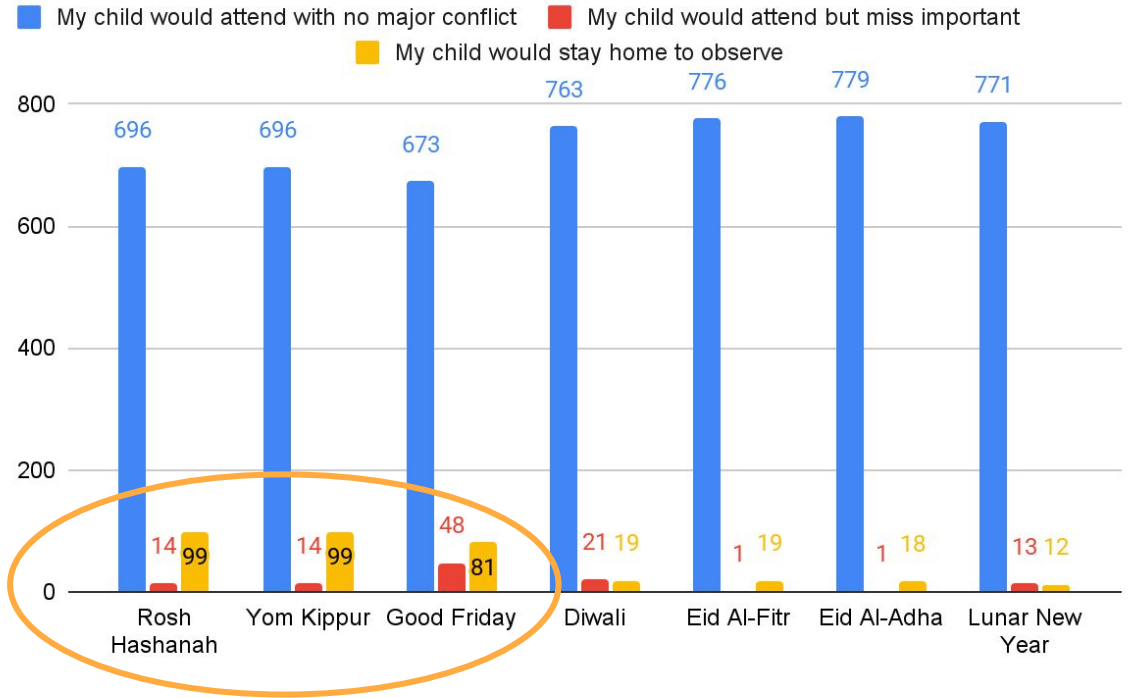
What amount of absences  
meaningfully disrupt *operations*?

# Attendance SPS

12% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur**

10% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**

Note: Grade-level breakdowns didn't show meaningful differentiation in rates



# Attendance SPS

## Diwali

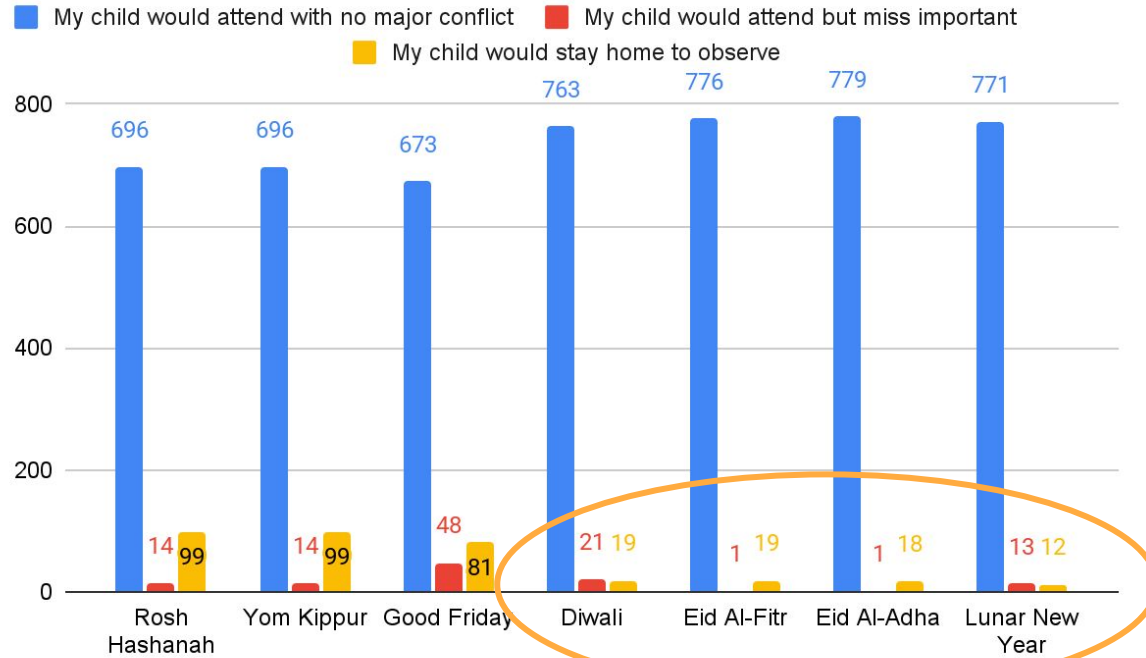
2.4% reported expected absences, with an add'l 2.6% who would miss observation to attend

## Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha

2.4% reported expected absences

## LNy

1.5% reported expected absences, with an add'l 1.4% who would miss observation



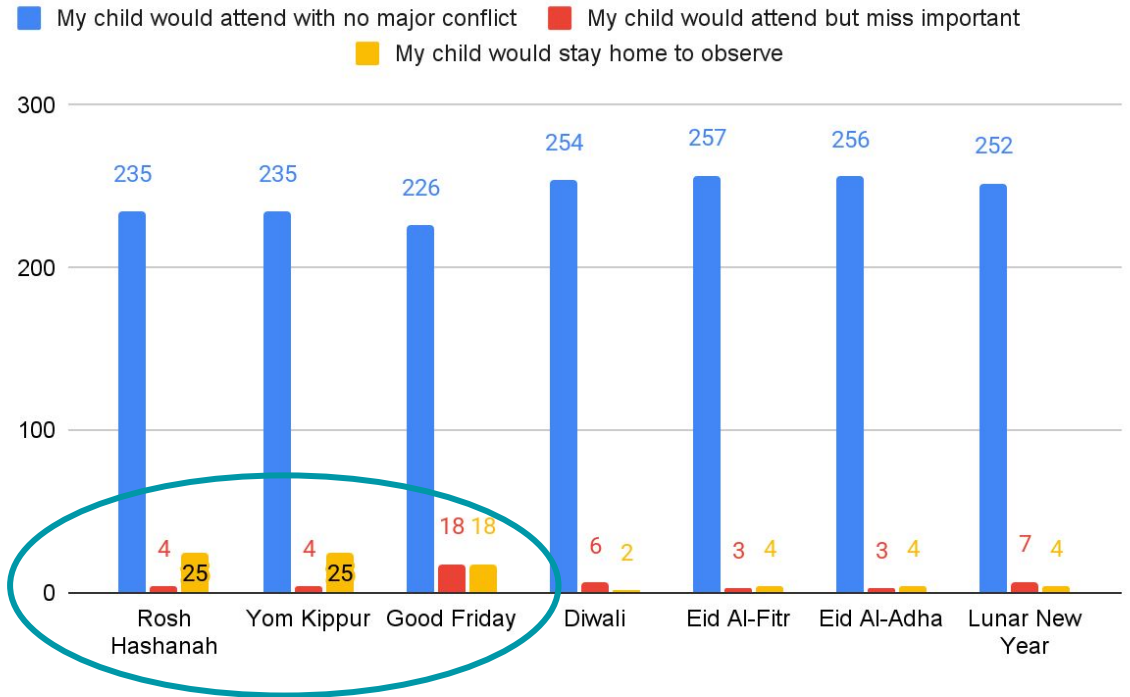
# Attendance LPS

9.5% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur**

7% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**, with an add'l 7% who would miss observance

**Hanscom AFB:** 9 of 47 reported expected absences on Good Friday (19%)

Note: Data from Hanscom in other categories were sparse



# Attendance LPS

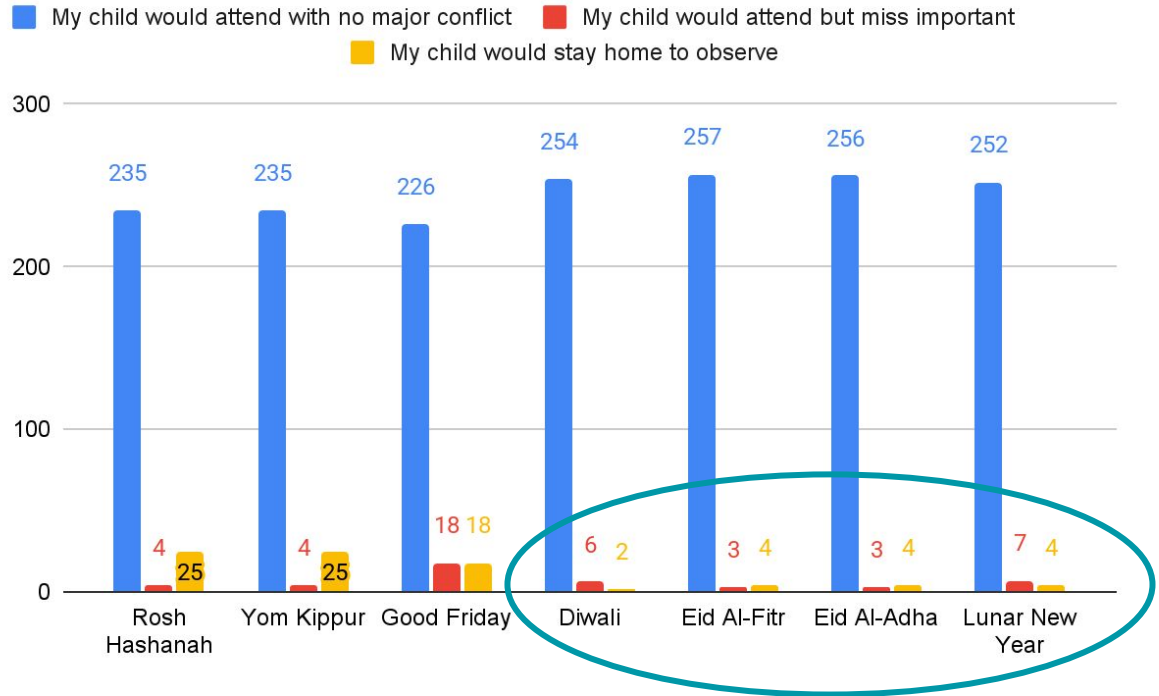
## Diwali

2.4% reported expected absences, with an add'l 2.6% who would miss observation to attend

**Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha**  
2.4% reported expected absences

## LNy

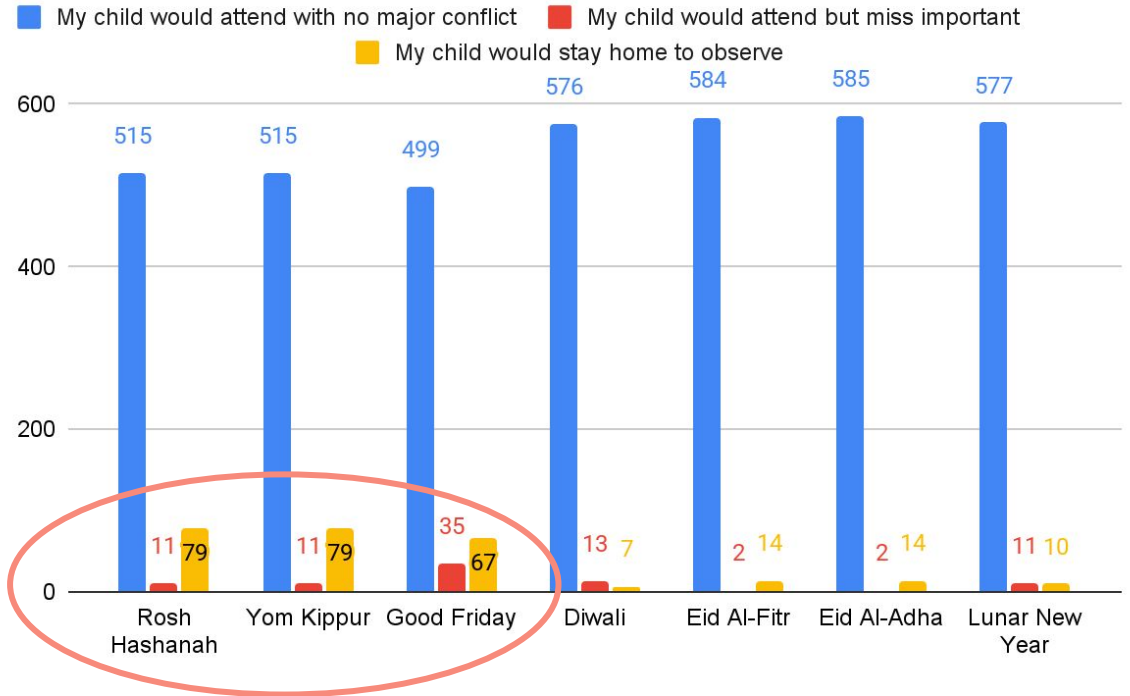
1.5% reported expected absences, with an add'l 1.4% who would miss observation



# Attendance LSRHS

13% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**, with an add'l 2% missing observation

11% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**, with an add'l 6% missing observation



# Attendance LSRHS

## Diwali

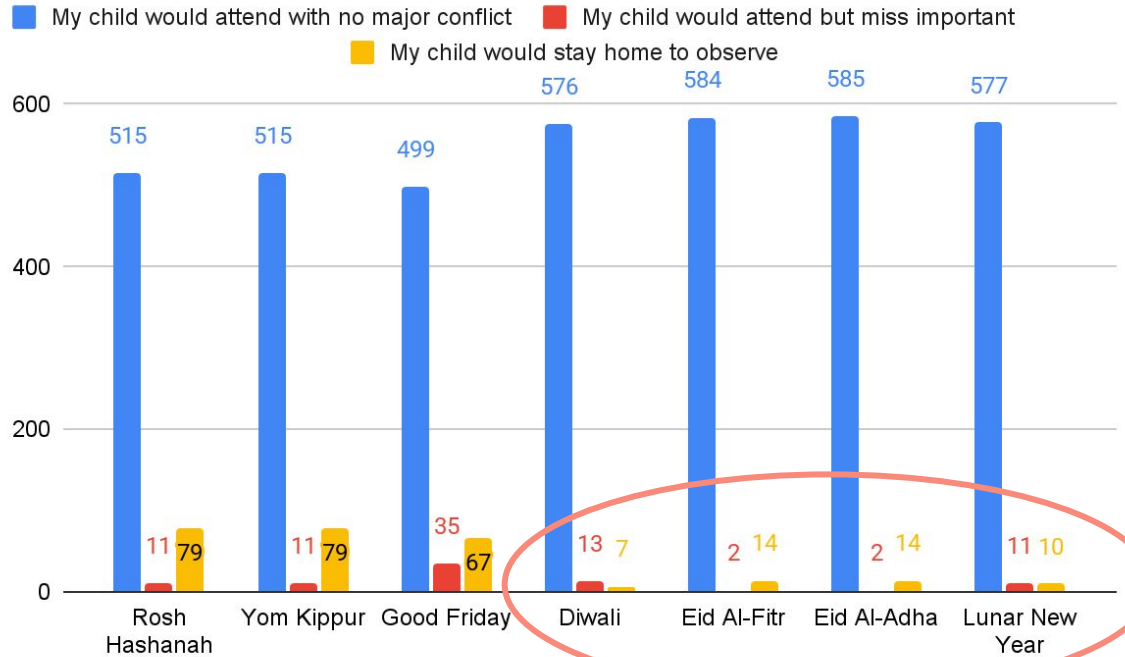
1.2% reported expected absences, with an add'l 2.2% who would miss observation to attend

## Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha

2.3% reported expected absences

## LNy

1.7% reported expected absences, with an add'l 1.8% who would miss observation



# Expected Attendance **Staff**

“If school were in session on the following holidays,  
how would this affect your attendance?”



# Critical question

(for administration)

What amount of absences  
meaningfully disrupt *operations* or  
meaningfully impact the *budget*?

# Attendance SPS

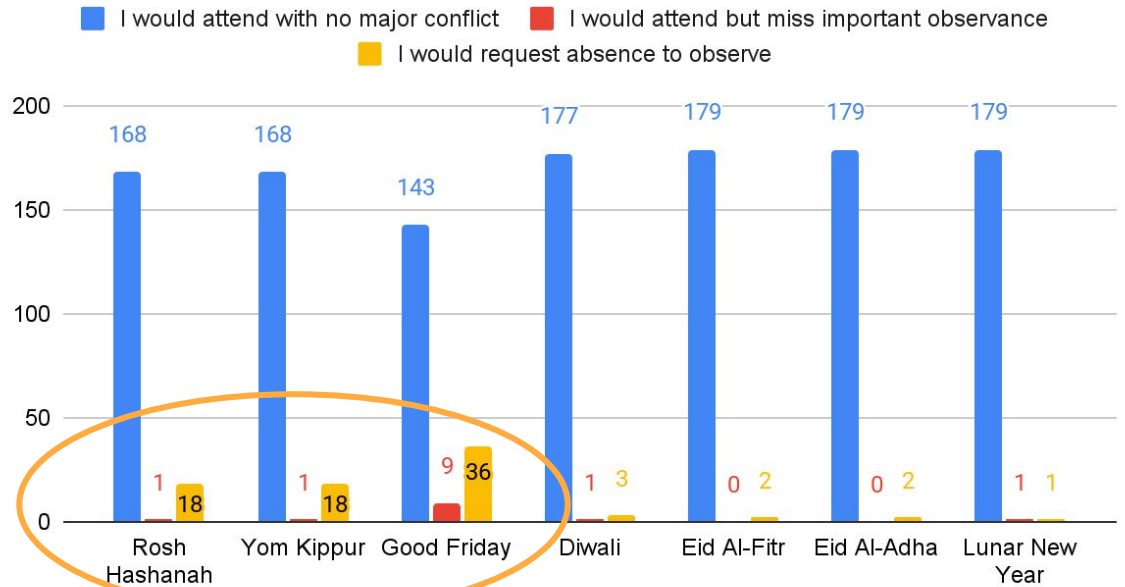
9.6% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur**

19% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**

## Add'l holidays

<2% of staff reported expected absences on the for proposed add'l holidays

### SPS Staff Attendance on days of observance



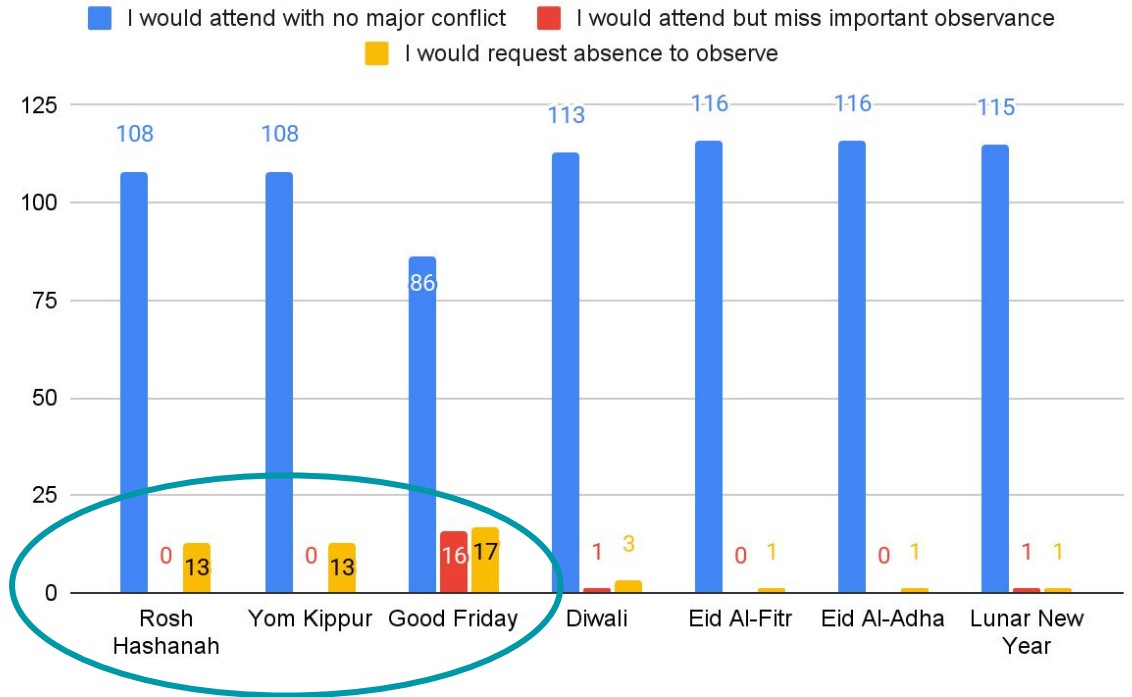
# Attendance LPS

11% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur**

14% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**, with an add'l 13% who would miss observance

## Add'l holidays

<3% of staff reported expected absences on the for proposed add'l holidays



# Attendance LSRHS

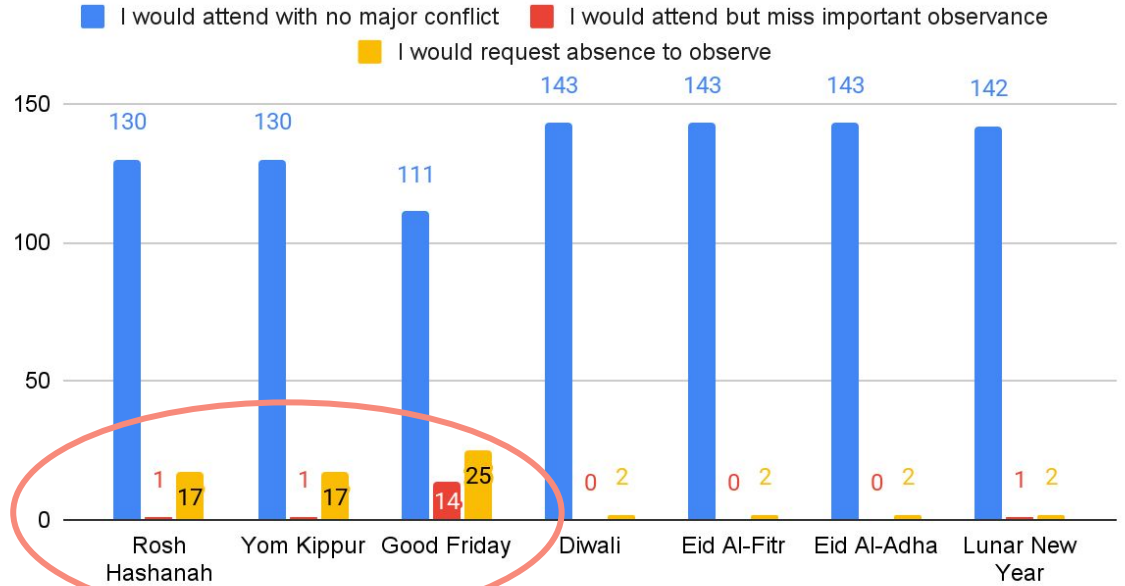
11.5% reported expected absences on **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

17% reported expected absences on **Good Friday**, with an add'l 9% missing observation

## Add'l holidays

<2% of staff reported expected absences on the for proposed add'l holidays

### LSRHS Staff Attendance on days of observance



# Calendar preference

Considering your own household, which calendar approach do you prefer?

Thinking beyond your own household, which calendar approach best serves the district and broader community overall?

# Critical question

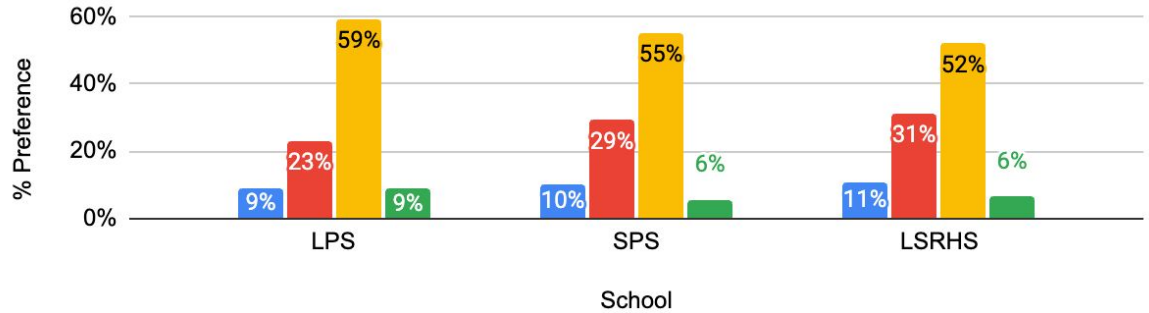
Which calendar do people want to see in their district?

# Calendar preference Family

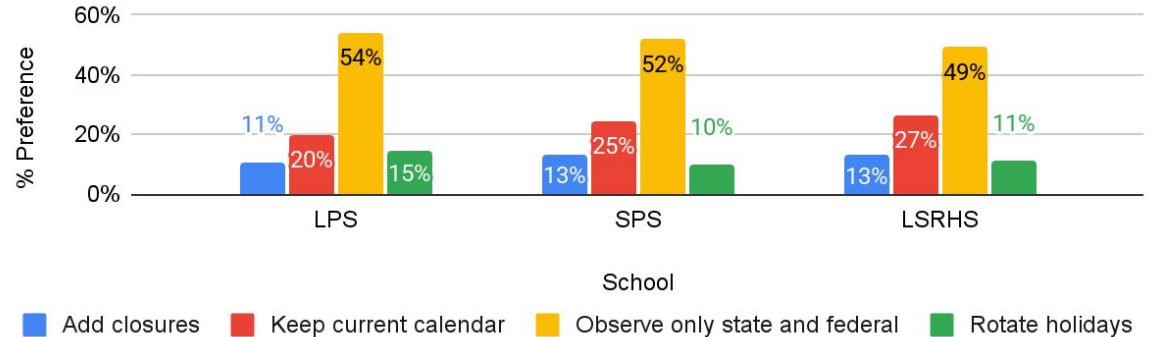
The **majority** of each district prefers only observing **state and federal holidays**

Participants generally believed the **community would benefit** from additional holidays more than they personally would

Family: Own preference



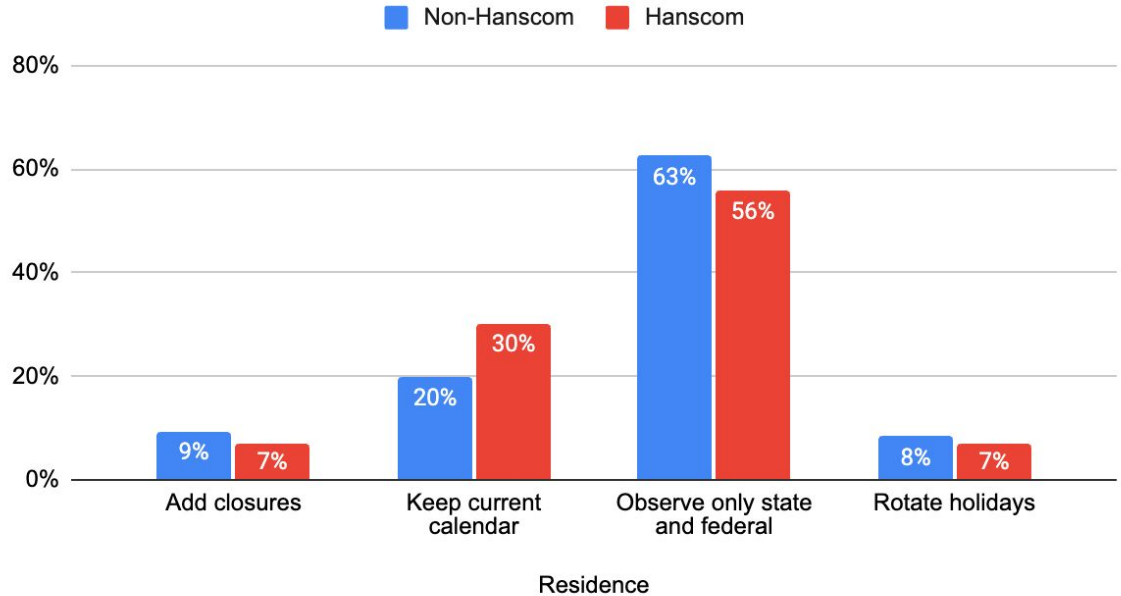
Family: Thinking beyond own preference



# Calendar preference Lincoln/Hanscom

Hanscom shows notably **higher support** than Lincoln School for maintaining the current calendar

Lincoln School vs Hanscom





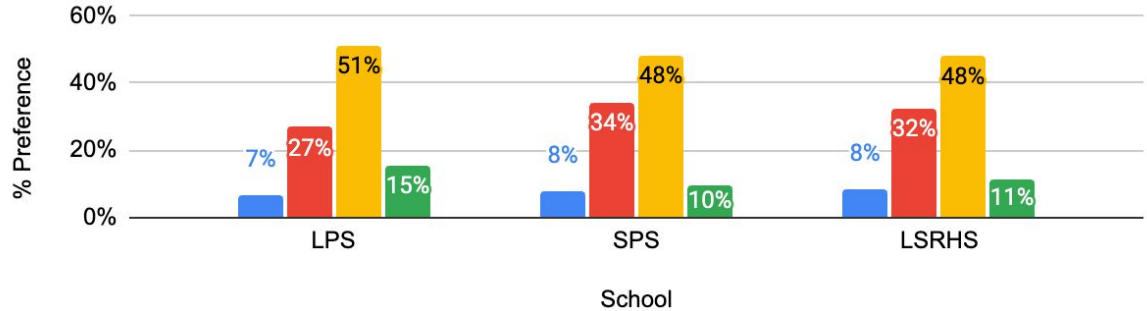
# Calendar preference Staff

The **plurality** of each district prefers only observing **state and federal holidays**

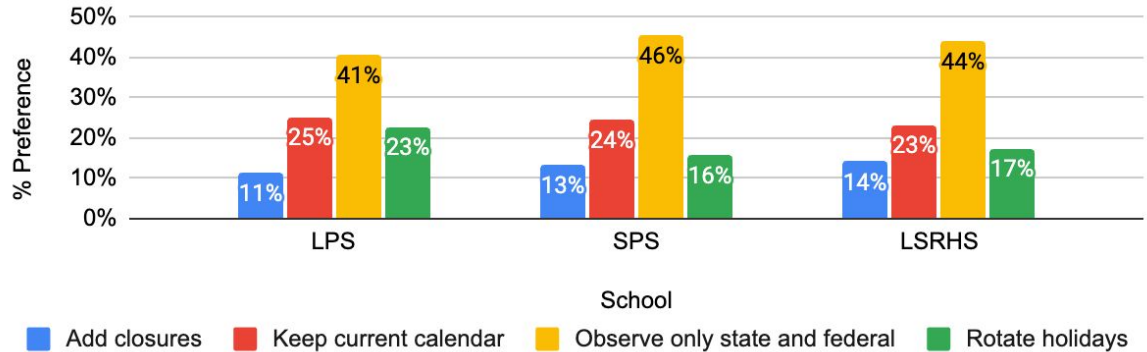
Staff shows stronger support than families for not changing the calendar

Staff also generally believed the **community would benefit** from additional holidays more than they personally would

Staff: Own preference



Staff: Thinking beyond own preference



# Level of Support **Family/caregiver**

Please indicate your level of support for each option

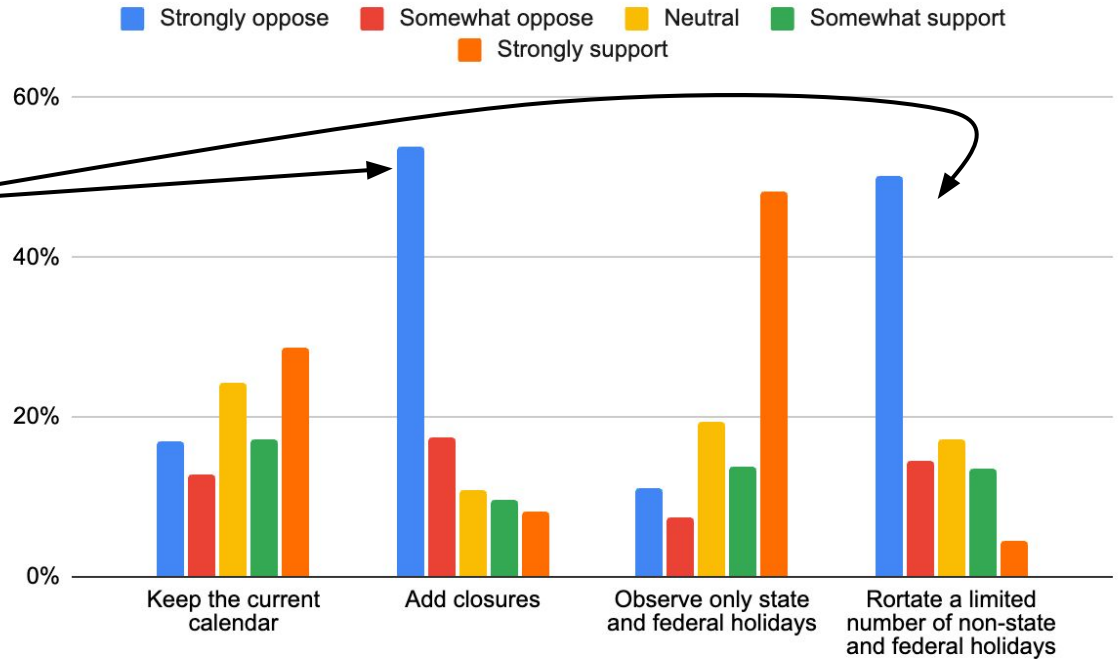
# Critical question

Which calendars have strong support?  
Which have strong opposition?

# Calendar preference SPS

## Key insights

Strong opposition and minimal support for adding or rotating closures

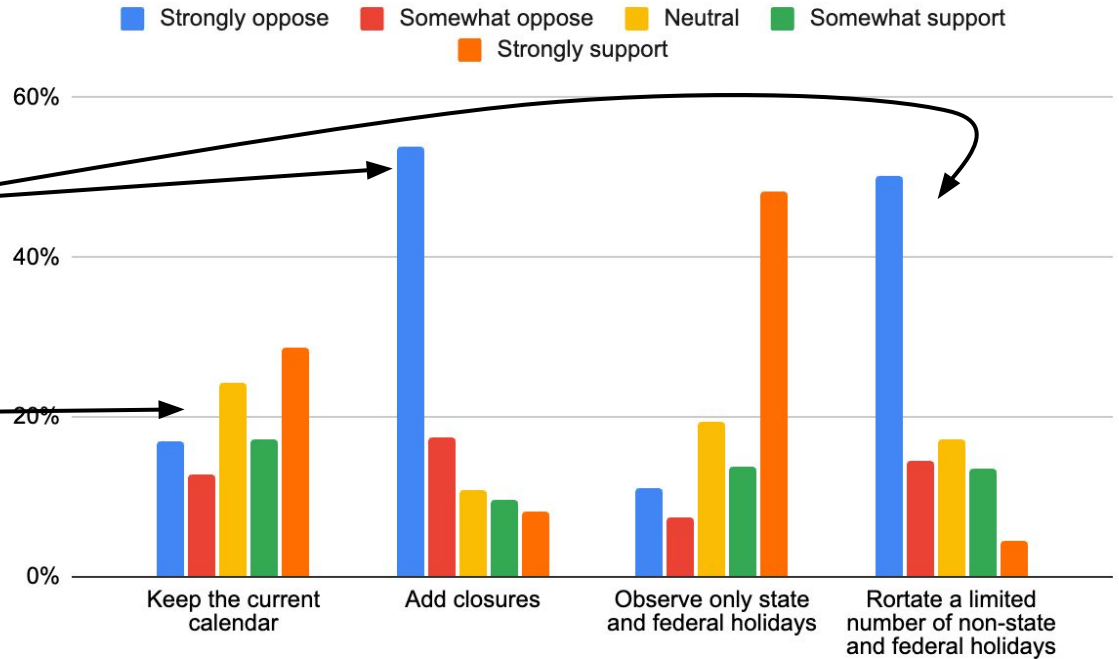


# Calendar preference SPS

## Key insights

Strong opposition and minimal support for adding or rotating closures

Low opposition to current calendar



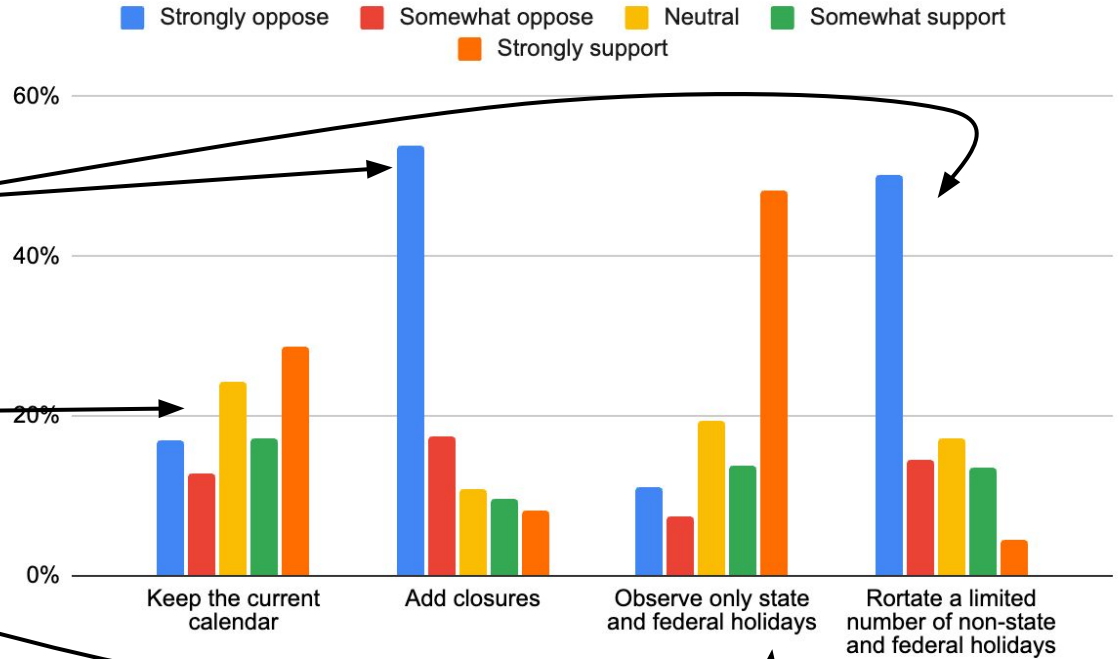
# Calendar preference SPS

## Key insights

Strong opposition and minimal support for adding or rotating closures

Low opposition to current calendar

Strong support with minimal opposition for observing only state & federal



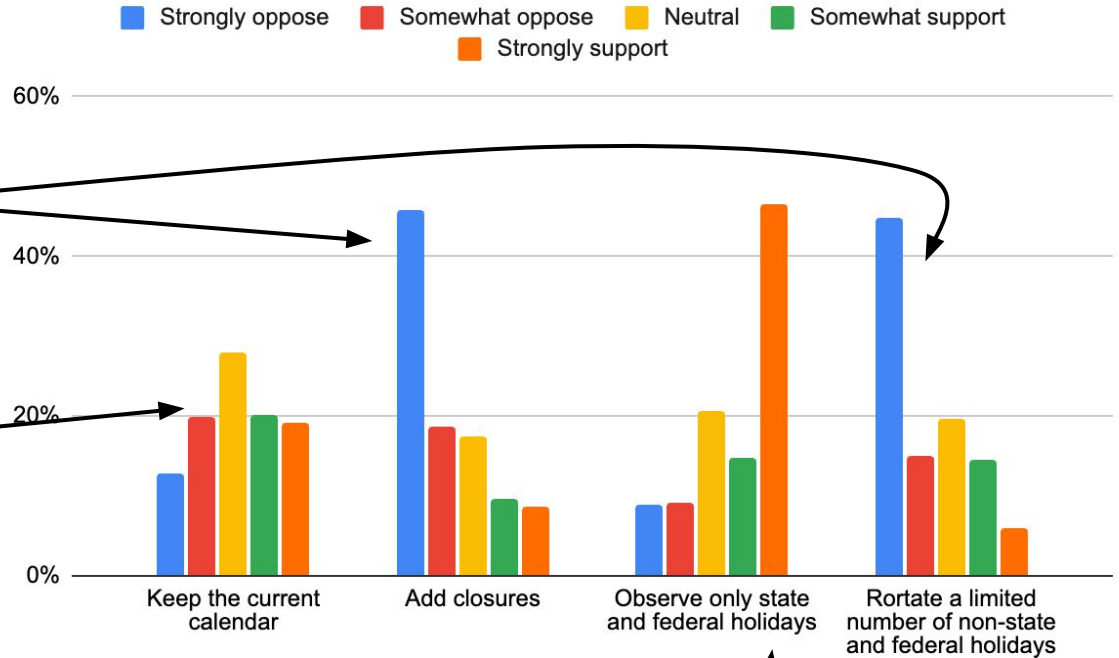
# Calendar preference LPS

## Similar patterns to SPS

Narrowly lower strong opposition for adding or rotating closures than SPS

Slightly more neutral to keeping the current calendar than SPS

Narrowly lower strong support for observing only state and federal holidays



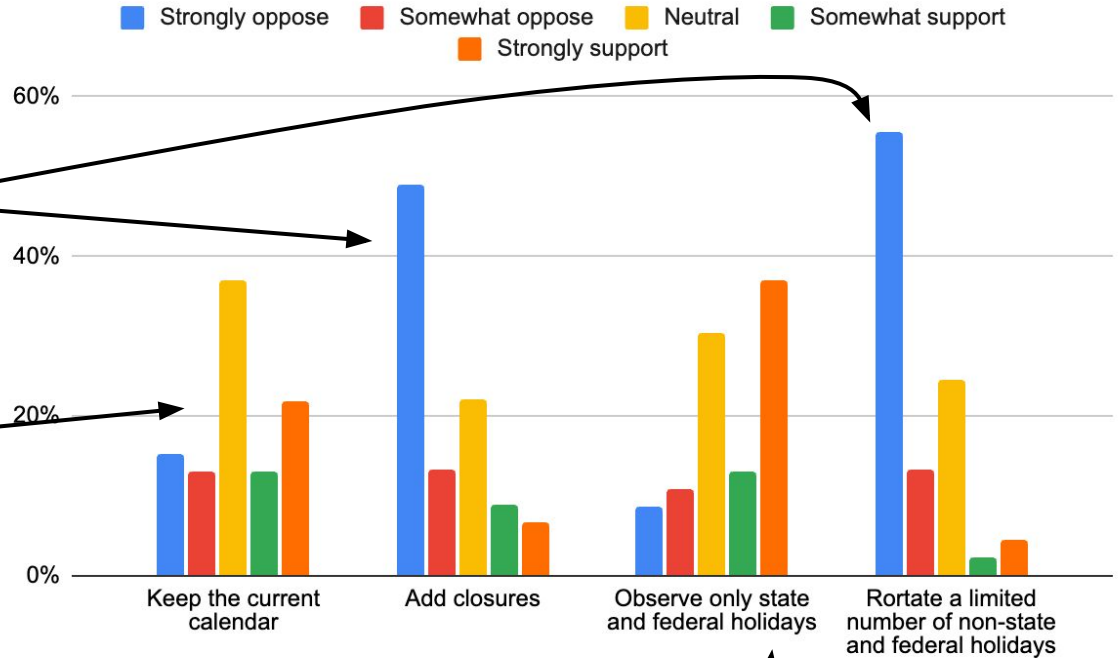
# Calendar preference LPS: Hanscom

## Relative to LPS overall

Higher opposition for adding or rotating closures than SPS

More neutral to keeping the current calendar than SPS

More neutral to observing only state and federal holidays





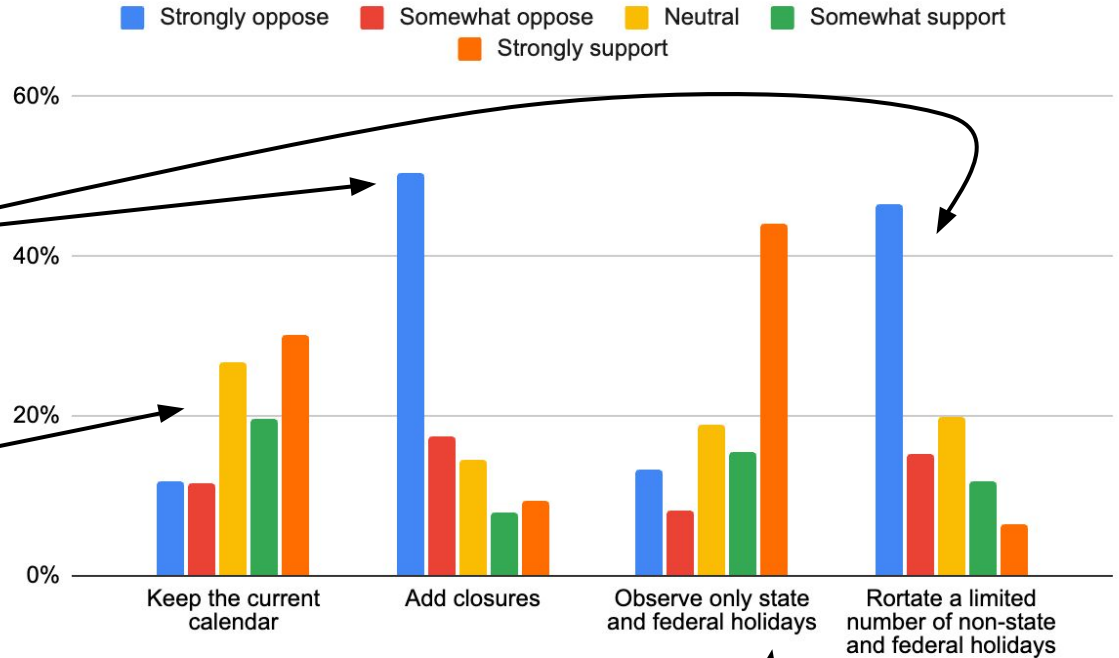
# Calendar preference LSRHS

Similar to SPS & LPS in all responses

Opposition to adding or rotating closures is similar to SPS

Similar neutral/support to maintaining the current calendar

Slightly lower strong support for state and federal than SPS or LPS



# Level of Support **Staff**

Please indicate your level of support for each option

# Critical question

Does staff have different preferences than families?

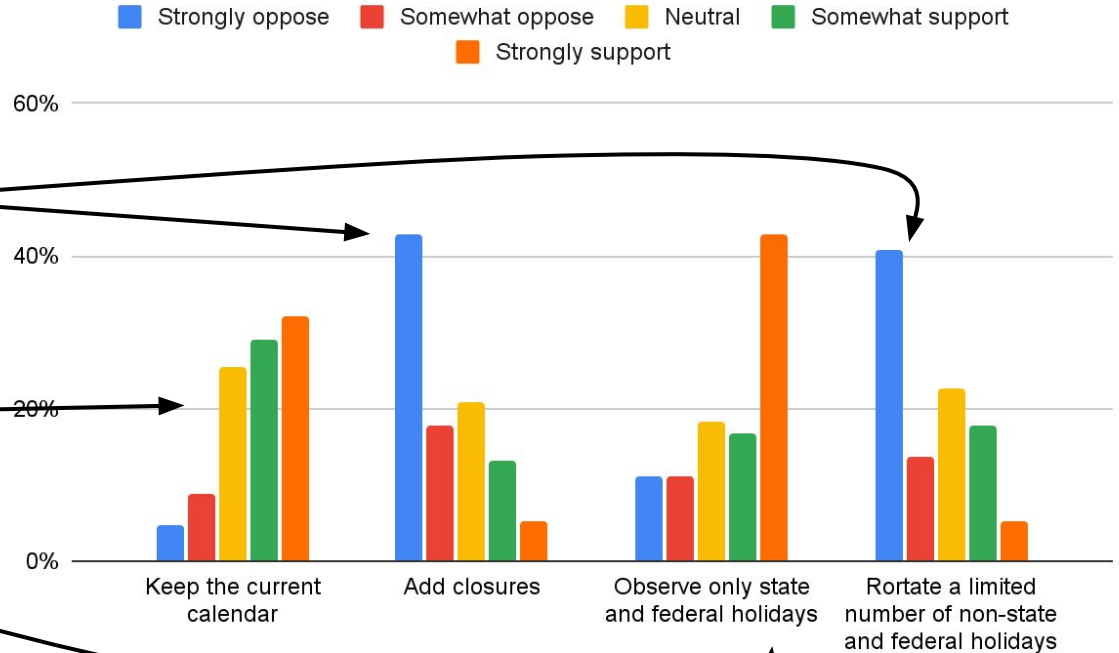
# Calendar preference SPS

## Compared to SPS families

More neutral support than families for adding or rotating closures

Higher support than families for the current calendar

Strong support for state & federal, but slightly lower than families



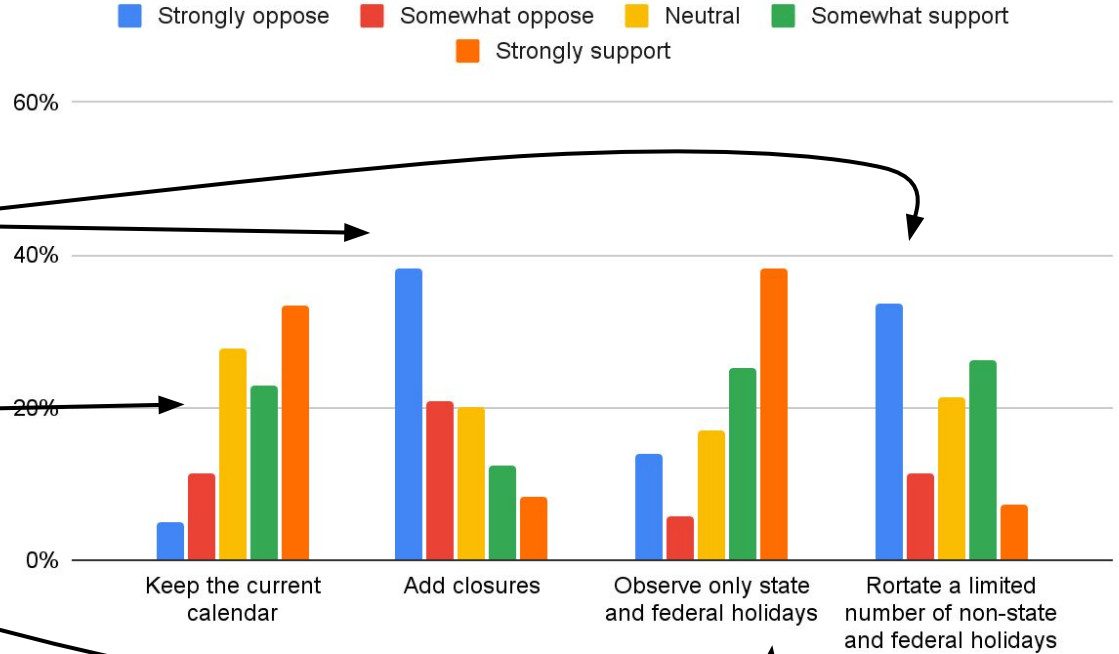
# Calendar preference LPS

## Compared to LPS families

Lower opposition to adding closures or rotating closures than families

More support for keeping the current calendar than families

Strong support for state and federal, but lower than families



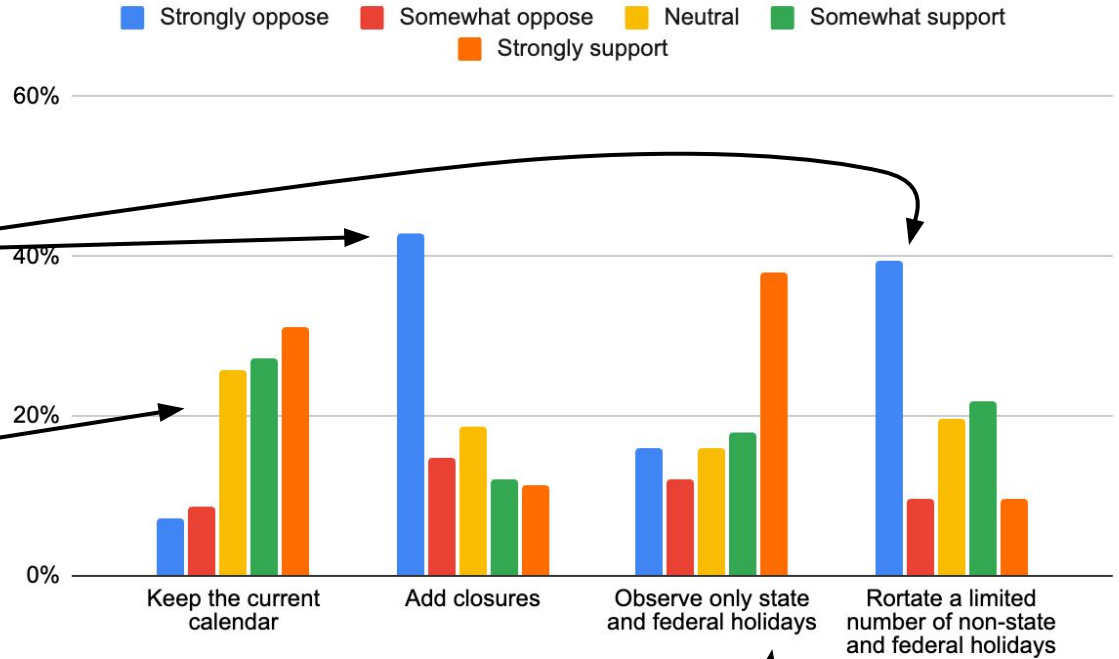
# Calendar preference LSRHS

Similar to SPS & LPS in all responses

Lower strong opposition than families to adding closures or rotating closures

Minorly higher support than families for the current calendar

Strong support for state & federal, but slightly lower than families



**Thank you!**

### **Summary of NSBA Guidance on School Holiday Recognition**

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) has not issued a binding policy for public schools religious observances, but has provided resources for school boards and administrators to understand constitutional constraints and best practices.

#### **Constitutional and Legal Compliance**

NSBA emphasizes that public schools must comply with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which requires governmental neutrality toward religion. Decisions about recognizing holidays should be grounded in state and federal law, not religious tradition. Recognizing only federal and state holidays provides clarity and reduces risk of legal challenge related to endorsement of a particular faith.

#### **Practical and Administrative Considerations**

NSBA notes that decisions about school closures should prioritize operational factors. Attendance data is a key consideration: if large portions of the student body and staff are likely to be absent, districts may consider closure. Otherwise, maintaining the school schedule supports instructional time and continuity. Using attendance thresholds rather than religious observances ensures decisions are made based on objective, secular data.

#### **Individual Religious Accommodation**

NSBA recommends providing individual accommodations rather than systemic closures for specific religious observances, NSBA highlights that districts can support individual students' and staff members' rights by providing excused absences for religious observance. This approach respects diverse faith practices while keeping the overall school calendar consistent. Policies should be transparent, equitable, and applied consistently across all religions.

### **Summary of MA DESE Guidance on School Holiday Recognition**

School committees have discretion over the school calendar but must comply with state law.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 4 Section 7, requires that all public offices, including public schools, must be closed on statewide legal holidays.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151B, Section 4(1A) and Chapter 151C, Section 2B, requires that students and employees be excused from school, without penalty, if they miss school for religious observances.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) advises that calendar decisions consider educational time-on-learning requirements and consistency across the school year.

#### **References**

National School Boards Association (NSBA). "Legal Issues: Religion in the Schools" / "Religion: Legal Pointers for Public Schools."  
<https://www.nsba.org/>

Massachusetts General Laws



<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). "School Year and School Day Requirements."

<https://www.doe.mass.edu>

## 2026-2027 School Calendar: Cheat Sheet

### Things to note about next year's calendar:

- Labor Day is on Monday, 9/7 – the latest it can be.
- Based on the current LEA contract, teachers cannot return before 8/31 (the last Monday in August) so it will be a late start even with students returning before Labor Day. By comparison this year's first day for teachers was 8/25/25. The first day for students would be Thursday 9/3.

### START OF SCHOOL

- V1: An after-Labor Day start would make the last day of school June 29.
- V2: An after-Labor Day start would make the last day of school June 28.
- V3: Could not have an after Labor Day start for students and comply with the LEA contract requirement that school ends by June 30 (with 5 snow days added in).

### DECEMBER BREAK

- V1: Adding the 3 days to the December break week to create a full 2-week break would make the last day of school (with 5 snow days) June 30. Must have a before Labor Day start.
- V2: Adding the 3 days to the December break week to create a full 2-week break would make the last day of school (with 5 snow days) June 29. Must have a before Labor Day start.
- V3: Could not have a 2-week December break week even with the before Labor Day start and comply with the LEA contract requirement that school ends by June 30 (with 5 snow days added in).

### GENERAL INFO

- Juneteenth (2027) lands on a Saturday so the observed day is Friday, June 18.
- This a negotiation year for the LEA so any potential changes to *Article 6 – School Year* could impact the stipulations above.

The regular work year (school year) of teachers (other than new faculty, who may be required to attend up to two (2) orientation sessions) will begin no earlier than the last Monday in August and will end no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>. In any given year, the School Committee, in consultation with the LEA may vote exceptions to these general guidelines.

### V1 - EXISTING HOLIDAYS:

- Rash Hashanah (2026) is Fri 9/11 to Sun 9/13. No school days off.

### V2 - FEDERAL HOLIDAYS ONLY:

- Holidays to remove from existing: Rash Hashanah, Yom Kippur, ½ Day Good Friday.

- 11 federal holidays listed below:

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Date</b>
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday	Third Monday in January
Washington's Birthday	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth National Independence Day	June 19
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Indigenous Peoples' Day	Second Monday in October
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

**V3 - ADDITIONAL 4 HOLIDAYS:**

- Diwali (2026) is on Sunday, 11/8. No school days off.
- Lunar New Year (2027) is on Saturday, 2/6. No school days off.
- Eid-Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha (2027) create one additional day off in March (3/10) and one in May (5/17) respectively.
- These dates fluctuate from year to year and could add 0-4 additional days off during any given year.



# LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LINCOLN, MA ACADEMIC YEAR CALENDAR 2026-2027

V2 – FEDERAL HOLIDAYS ONLY Approved at School Committee Meeting of XXX.

<p><b>August</b> 26-27: New Teacher Orientation 31: All Teachers Report</p> <p><b>September</b> 1-2: All Teachers Report 3: All Students Begin 7: No School</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>August/September 2026</b> 19 days</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30																																													
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<p><b>October</b> 12: No School</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>February 2027</b> 15 days</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>February</b> 15-19: No School - February Recess</p>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28																																																							
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School Committee Meeting – 6:00 p.m. in Hartwell Building Multipurpose Room  
 School Committee Working Session – 6:00 p.m. in Hartwell Building Multipurpose Room

### SCHOOL HOURS

- = Half Days
- = No School
- = Weekends

Lincoln & Hanscom K-8      M, T, Th, F 8:00-2:50; W 8:00-12:35  
 Preschool @ Lincoln      Mon-Fri 8:05-12:05  
 Preschool @ Hanscom      Mon-Fri 8:00-12:00

Back to School Nights  
TBD

Parent Conferences  
TBD

# LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, LINCOLN, MA ACADEMIC YEAR CALENDAR 2026-2027

V3 – PLUS 4 ADD'L HOLIDAYS. Approved at School Committee Meeting of XXX.

<p><b>August</b> 26-27: New Teacher Orientation 31: All Teachers Report</p> <p><b>September</b> 1-2: All Teachers Report 3: All Students Begin 7: No School 21: No School</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>August/September 2026</b> 18 days</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30																																													
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School Committee Meeting – 6:00 p.m. in Hartwell Building Multipurpose Room  
 School Committee Working Session – 6:00 p.m. in Hartwell Building Multipurpose Room

— = Half Days  
 = No School  
 = Weekends

**SCHOOL HOURS**

Lincoln & Hanscom K-8      M, T, Th, F 8:00-2:50; W 8:00-12:35  
 Preschool @ Lincoln      Mon-Fri 8:05-12:05  
 Preschool @ Hanscom      Mon-Fri 8:00-12:00

[Back to School Nights](#)  
 TBD  
[Parent Conferences](#)  
 TBD