

**Education Department**  
***MEMORANDUM***

**TO:** Principals, Head-Teachers, and K-10 School Boards

**DATE:** April 8, 2003

**FROM:** Robert Crux, Carolina Conference Superintendent of Education *RC*

**RE:** School Calendar Study Groups Dates for 2003/2004

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The integration of teacher study group dates into the 2003/2004 calendar has been encouraged and recommended by the Southern Union Conference Education Office. This new calendar is partly a response to many parents and constituents who wish to know what are doing in tangible ways to build and maintain quality in our educational system.

We recognize that educators need to stay current on the development of teaching strategies that are brain friendly and most effective for the classroom learning environment. Research indicates that the teacher study group model is the most effective way to implement current practices at the classroom level.

For over a decade teacher study groups have been an integral part of teacher professional growth in the Carolina Conference. Now specific teacher study group dates have been placed in the school calendar because of crossover grouping throughout the conference. On February 13, 2003, the Carolina Conference K-12 Board of Education voted to adopt the 2003/2004 school calendar (see enclosure). This calendar makes provision for eight half-days of professional development through teacher study groups during the school year.

The teacher study group dates are at approximately four week intervals. This allows teachers to receive feedback on methods and practices used in the classroom from their colleagues and to address any changes in a timely manner. Effective study groups need to meet a minimum of eight times a year with an average of 32 clock hours. The purpose of study groups begins to be defeated when teachers meet more than four hours per session or less than four hours per month. The accountability and implementation process begins breaking down.

This memo is for the purpose of soliciting your support as the local school board. Please help our office and the Southern Union Conference Office of Education move forward with ongoing and effective professional growth of teachers via the study group model. We recognize these study group dates may be an inconvenience for some parents whose daily program does not coincide with the calendar. It may be possible that the local boards could help find a solution to that challenge. Please help your constituents to see value in this initiative by making arrangements to adopt the 2003/2004 calendar with the selected teacher study group dates as posted.

We appreciate the continuing work you do on behalf of our schools in the Carolina Conference. Should you have any questions about the new calendar, our office would be pleased to respond.

## *Carolina Conference*

### 2003 - 2004 K-10 School Calendar

New Teachers' Orientation	July 28
Teachers Report to Work -	July 28 (Monday)
Pre-school days	July 28 -August 6
Principals' Advisory	July 29
Cadré Leaders' Retreat	July 30

#### **First Period - August 7 - October 17 - 49 days**

Registration (counted as a day of school)	TBA
First Day of School	August 7 (Thurs.)
Study Group Meeting #1 (No school)	August 25
(All teachers meet at the Conference Office)	
Standardized Testing	August 26 - September 5
Labor Day - No School	September 1
Study Group Meeting #2 (1/2 day of school)	September 15
Teacher's Convention	October 5 - 8

#### **Second Period - October 20 - December 19 - 43 days**

Study Group Meeting #3 (1/2 day of school)	October 20
Adventist Education Week	November 10 - 14
Study Group Meeting #4 (1/2 day of school)	November 10
Thanksgiving Recess	November 27 - 30
Christmas Vacation	December 20 - January 4

#### **Third Period - January 5 - March 12 - 43 Days**

Study Group Meeting #5 (1/2 day of school)	January 12
*Martin Luther King Day	January 19
Study Group Meeting #6 (1/2 day of school)	February 9
*Presidents' Day	February 16
Spring Professional Development Day	February 23
Spring Recess	February 28 - March 7

#### **Fourth Period - March 15 - May 19 47 - Days**

Study Group Meeting #7 (1/2 day of school)	March 22
Study Group Meeting #8 (1/2 day of school)	April 12
Outdoor Education - (Sm. Schools)	April 20 - 23
Last Day of School	May 18
Post School Week	May 19 - 21

\* Choose one of these days only.

182 Total School Days  
(Includes 2 snow days!)

*(Adopted by the K-12 Board on February 13, 2003.)*