Running Head: Year-round Schooling

Year-round Schooling – Perceptions of Students, Teachers and Administrators

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Master of Arts in Education at
Marietta College

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Master’s Examination Committee
Dr. William Bauer Approved by
Dr. Cathy Skouzes

________________________
I would like to dedicate my thesis to my grandparents Ron and Jackie Kincaid. They have supported me through all of my endeavors and have cheered me on through all the obstacles along the way. Without their help, love, and support, I would not have been able to accomplish all I have. I appreciate everything they have done for me and cannot find enough words to say how much I thank them. I love them and adore them so much.

Thanks!
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine discover the phenomenon of negative perceptions toward year-round schooling. The researcher interviewed students, teachers, and administrators from Marietta High School to obtain his or her opinions on year-round schooling. The researcher asked for possible benefits, downfalls, and perceptions of others in the community. The researcher followed up by asking which type of calendar, traditional or year-round, each subject would choose if given the opportunity. The researcher concluded that not as many people had a negative perception as previously believed. Of the individuals who had a negative perception, many did not understand the function or construction of the year-round calendar. When they were provided with information on the systems available, a few subjects changed his or her opinion. Many benefits were listed as well as some downfalls to the system. Most of the subjects feel it would not be well perceived by parents, the public, and other students. The researcher believes that many of the results for choosing a year-round school or a traditional school were based solely on the needs and wants of the individual, not the well being of the students. More research needs to be done in this area to validate the viewpoints of the subjects, and the community needs to be made knowledgeable on the subject matter to form and honest, educated opinion.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Many students, teachers, and administrators shrieked at the thought of attending school all year and losing his or her summer. When living in an area where year-round schools are not prevalent, people tended to view this alternative schedule negatively. How many times have you talked to a teacher or student about the school year in the spring when he or she did not express some kind of wish for summer to come soon or a little time off? Did they discuss feeling drained or burned out? The fear that year-round schools take away your free summers is not completely true. Depending on the type of year-round school, it can simply mean spreading part of the summer break throughout the year (Weatherford, 2001).

Many people see the traditional September to June calendar as the best course to take. They may view it as the way it has always been; therefore, it must be the best schedule for students. This is not necessarily true. The traditional schedule was formed during a time of an agrarian society (Weatherford, 2001). Having the summer months off allowed children to help on the farm. Our society is no longer on this track. Weatherford (2001) states, “The standard school calendar is insufficient for meeting the needs of contemporary society” (p.15). According to Ballinger, “The traditional school calendar is not an educational calendar now, and has never been, and never will be. Individuals learn in all seasons of the year” (Holt & Kidwell, 1998, p.3). They discussed Ballinger’s thoughts on year-round schooling by stating, “Educational programs such as year-round
education which respond to the way people learn offer promise to our nation’s students and minimize the reality of summer learning loss” (p.3). In a growing society, maybe it is time for a change. Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher said, “Nothing is permanent but change” (Holt & Kidwell, 1998, p.2). Overall, much research has been provided to support the idea that year-round schooling is beneficial for students, teachers, and administrators.

During World War II, psychological studies predicted that factory workers could help increase production if provided with occasional breaks (Holt & Kidwell, 1998). This could be the case for education as well. Is it possible that with more breaks, teachers and students would feel refreshed and rejuvenated and be more productive in school? Studies showed there were many benefits to year-round schools. Research indicated that year-round schooling increased achievement scores, improved attitudes of students, teachers, and administrators, increased attendance, reduced the dropout rate, and in some cases reduced overcrowding and expenses (Holt & Kidwell, 1998). These many possible benefits depended on the type of year-round school and how well it was executed.

There are two main types of year-round schools, multi-track and single-track. On a multi-track calendar, the educational periods and vacations are spread throughout the year. Students are on different tracks; therefore, some students are in session while others are on vacation (Kid Source, 2001). In a single-track school, the calendar is also spread out over the year allowing for more breaks during the school year, but all students attend school at the same time.
With so many schools across the nation turning to a year-round calendar and so much research to demonstrate the effectiveness of year-round schooling, it was time to look at people’s perceptions toward this change. Did people have evidence to make them think one way or another? Did they even understand what year-round schooling was, or were they simply giving their opinions without any background knowledge about these systems? It was important to find out how individuals felt and why they felt the way they did.

Statement of the Problem

People are demonstrated a resistance to year-round schooling. People were unaware of the benefits that could be provided through a single-track year-round school, because they have never heard of the concept or are unfamiliar with how they work. Often, people based their decisions on the fact that he or she would have a shorter summer.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study was to discover the phenomenon of prejudiced negative opinions of Marietta High School students, teachers, and administrators regarding year-round schooling.

Hypothesis

Students, teachers, and administrators have a negative perception regarding year-round schooling.
**Null Hypothesis**

Students, teachers, and administrators do not have a negative perception regarding year-round schooling.

**Definition of Terms**

TRADITIONAL CALENDAR- Refers to the August to June calendar with school not in session during the summer.

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION- Year-round education (YRE) is when the calendar year is reorganized to provide learning more continuously throughout the year by spacing the long summer vacation into shorter, more frequent vacations throughout the year. Year-round schools may be on a single-track or multi-track schedule (Kid Source, 2001).

SINGLE-TRACK YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION- A single-track schedule is generally a 180-day school year, which evenly distributes instructional blocks and vacation periods over the 12-month year (Holt and Kidwell, 1998; Kid Source, 2001). This is a plan in which all students attend school on the same schedule of instructional sessions and vacations (Weatherford, 2001).

MULTI-TRACK YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION- A multi-track schedule also staggers the instructional and vacation periods of each track throughout the entire year, so that some students are receiving instruction while others are on vacation (Kid Source, 2001).
PERCEPTIONS- The insight, intuition, or knowledge gained by perceiving; recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli based chiefly on memory; the capacity for such insight (Dictionary.com, 2006).

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR- It provides programs outside of the 180-day school year. The purpose is to remediate or continue education to lessen the possibilities of summer learning loss (Kid Source, 2001).
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Fairchild & Boulay (2002) stated, “It is difficult to imagine a professional musician or athlete whose performance would not suffer from a three-month vacation from practice each year” (p.2). They added, “While it’s clear everyone should experience periodic breaks from their daily routines, it’s also true that prolonged periods of time without practice affects performance.” Simpson (2000) reported one mother saying about her children, “They are ready to go back to school at the end of July. They don’t miss the summer break” (p.27). All young people experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during summer. On average, students lose approximately 2.6 months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months. (Reading is Fundamental, Inc., 2006). The clear solution to this problem seems to be year-round schooling, but what is year-round schooling?

YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLING

Most schools in America are still operating on a traditional calendar; however, this calendar was created to support an agrarian society. It allowed students to help on the farm when the harvesting and planting of crops was necessary. We no longer live in a society where farming is the main source of income for families (Weatherford, 2001). In addition, research demonstrated that all students experience substantial learning loss in procedural and factual knowledge over the course of the summer (Simpson, 2000). For this reason, researchers have been considering a different school calendar for many years.
The term year-round schooling frightens some people because it brings up images of students and teachers sitting in classrooms 365 days out of the year (Simpson, 2000). This is not true, however. The first year-round school (YRS) opened in 1904 (Sexton, 2003). Year-round education has been defined by Holt & Karr-Kidwell (1998) as “an alternative calendar or schedule for learning which evenly distributes instructional blocks and vacation-intersession periods over a 12-month year” (p.3). Another group says year-round education (YRE) is when the calendar year is reorganized to provide learning more continuously throughout the year by spacing the long summer vacation into shorter, more frequent vacations throughout the year (Kid Source, 2001). Jim Lerher added, “students in most American year-round school districts spend the same amount of days in class as students in traditional calendar schools - the days are just arranged differently, with smaller, more frequent breaks throughout the year. The summer break is perhaps only a month, instead of two or three” (Lerher, 2001). This concept, while still foreign to many districts, has grown over the years.

Weatherford (2001) reported, “More than one million students in more than 400 school districts now attend some type of year-round school program”(p.3). Wake County Public School System in North Carolina is one of these schools. They found that many people cringed at the thought of attending school all year, but they refuted the thought by stating that all of their students attend school for 180 days just like students in traditional schools. The year-round calendar simply spreads the 180 school days over the entire year. Students in this year-round school are in session for 45 days and then have a 15-day break. In addition, year-round students have the same holidays as students on the traditional calendar (Wake County Public School System, 2006).
Once one decides to experiment with a year-round school, it is necessary to
decide what kind of track they would like to be on. Year-round schools can be on either
a multi-track or single-track system, both with different benefits (Kidsource, 2001). It is
up to the school or district to decide what needs and goals are to be met to determine
which track will work best for their school.

SINGLE-TRACK YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL

The single-track school, according to Weatherford, is a plan in which students
attend school during the same sessions and have vacation at the same time. It is usually
implemented to increase overall instructional time and improve student achievement by
spreading learning into continuous intervals (Weatherford, 2001). A single-track
schedule is generally a 180-day school year, which evenly distributes instructional blocks
and vacation periods over the 12-month year (Holt and Kidwell, 1998; Kid Source,
2001). The single-track calendar is used more often than a multi-track calendar with year-
round schools. Once one has made the decision to enter a single-track year round school,
one needs to determine how the days will be laid out. The most popular calendar on this
track is the 45-15 calendar. This means students attend school for 45 days then have a
15-day break. Other types of calendars include 60-20, 25-15, 30-5, 50-15, and many
more. Basically, the days can be spread out however the school wishes as long as the
students are all on the same track (Holt & Karr-Kidwell, 1998).
MULTI-TRACK YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL

The multi-track design was created to alleviate overcrowding (Weatherford, 2001). Multi-track means that the students in the school are divided into four groups or tracks. Each track follows a separate schedule. The schedules are staggered so that at any given point, three of the groups are in school and one track is out on break. By conducting schools on a multi-track system, where one group is always on break, schools are able to accommodate up to 33 percent more students in one building. For every three schools on a multi-track year-round calendar, one less school has to be built (Wake County Public School System, 2006).

BENEFITS

The decision to implement a year-round school can be attributed to three main advantages: (a) increased student achievement; (b) greater satisfaction for students, teachers, and parents; and (c) cost savings. The first two benefits were often observed in both types of calendars, while cost savings were typically associated only with multi-track year-round schools, because they helped postpone the need to build new schools in areas experiencing significant population growth (Mcmillen, 2006). Palmer and Benis stated the benefits for single-track schools were as follows: “improved achievement, improved teacher and student attendance, reduction in discipline problems, reduction in teacher stress, increased motivation among teachers and students after returning refreshed from more frequent breaks, and increased availability of enrichment opportunities during intersessions” (p.3) In addition, they felt the benefits of being on a multi-track schedule were less overcrowding, smaller class sizes, opportunities for teachers to work year round, and cost savings.
Concerning achievement, Simpson found that students generally scored lower on standardized tests at the end of the summer than they did on the same test at the beginning of the summer (Simpson, 2000). One possibility for the increased academic achievement in year-round schools was that they used intersessions to provide remediation and enrichment activities, thereby increasing students' exposure to the curriculum (Mcmillen, 2006). Although the first year-round school was started over 100 years ago, many schools have not adopted this calendar. The schools that have adopted this new schedule did so for some of the reasons mentioned previously. Many of the schools have changed to alleviate overcrowding while others tried to gain better attendance, increased academic performance, and improved behavior (Sexton, 2003).

Shields and Oberg stated that many studies have indicated either a gain in academic achievement or at least no decline for students in year-round schools. They added that the year-round schedule was even more beneficial for students who are at-risk due to the opportunity to take advantage of intersessions for remediation (Shields & Oberg, 1999). Another benefit they added was positive attitudes, which had been reported from students, teachers, and administrators in year-round schools. “Students maintain or improve their involvement in extracurricular activities and believe that they are receiving at least as high a quality of instruction as in traditional calendar schools” (p. 129). It was also reported that students felt it had a positive impact on employment opportunities. They felt they were more prepared to learn, more motivated, and enjoyed school more than students in traditional schools. Administrators who had experience in both traditional and YRS tended to favor the year-round schedule. Weatherford (2001) pointed out, “advocates for year-round schooling say there are benefits for students of all
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abilities, more potential for uplifting the teaching profession, and a fiscal advantage to the taxpayer” (p.5). She added other potential advantages such as expanded enrichment, improved redemption, higher achievement, greater community satisfaction, and possible reduction in class sizes. One school reported operating on a single-track schedule, attending school for 45 days then having a 15-day break, known as “track-out” before returning to school for another 45 days. The cycle repeated itself throughout the entire year. One benefit seen here was that families could use this time to take family vacations at times when attractions may not be as crowded.

The time the students are scheduled off can be used for additional learning. Many YRS offer intersession programs during track-out for students who are behind and need to catch up in their studies.

Some of the advantages to the multi-track, year-round calendar included the expanded use of our school buildings and being able to accommodate more students in a single building. This saves on construction costs by better utilizing available space. Other advantages included savings on costs for books, materials and other equipment, lessening the amount of learning loss that occurs after a long summer break, a wider variety of vacation options for families and the lessening of teacher and student burnout throughout the year by providing more frequent breaks (Wake County Public School System, 2006). There was also evidence that year-round programs may be particularly beneficial for cognitively and economically disadvantaged students, especially in reading (McMillen, 2006).
MISCONCEPTIONS

Year-round schooling generated strong feelings, both positive and negative. Year-round schooling is a misleading term; it makes many students imagine that they would have to say goodbye forever to summer traditions, such as summer camp or beach vacations (Lehrer, 2001). Most people do not understand the way year-round schooling works or the different types of calendars that are available. They feel the will have to attend school 365 days a year. They have perceived it as a negative due to lack of knowledge and understanding.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

The term Extended School Year (ESY) as defined by Kidsource included a range of options in providing programs outside of the traditional 180-day school year. The issues of learning loss and the time spent reviewing at the beginning of the school year have been pivotal in the litigation that has advanced the concept of extended school year (Kidsource, 2001). Pittman, Cox, & Burshfie said many states were considering extending the school year due to public pressure regarding low achievement scores. They believed extending the school year and time in the classroom would raise standardized achievement scores (Pittman et al, 1986). Research indicated that extended school year services had been used for students on Individualized Education Programs (IEP). This extended year was often used because of regression or recoupment, the nature or severity of the disability, or breakthrough opportunities (Orfei, 2001). Along with students on IEP’s, low-income children experienced greater summer learning loss than those in higher income homes (Reading is Fundamental, Inc., 2006). If students in special
education need these extra services beyond the regular calendar days, is it not possible that the year-round schedule would benefit them as well?

SUMMARY

With so much evidence showing substantial learning loss over the traditional summer break, year-round schooling seemed to be the appropriate solution. Research indicated many benefits surrounding year-round schooling. It can provide higher achievement scores, increased positive attitudes for students and teachers, a decreased dropout rate, and cost savings, among many other benefits. Single-track and multi-track systems can both be beneficial. Which calendar to choose depends on what goals the school system is trying to achieve.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Most of America still runs on a traditional September to June calendar although much research has demonstrated many benefits for students, teachers, and administrators in year-round schooling. This study was designed to investigate the phenomenon of negative attitudes toward year-round schooling. A qualitative design was used to determine the views and opinions of participants in a traditional school system on year-round schooling. This study was limited to students, teachers, and administrators at Marietta High School in Marietta, Ohio.

SUBJECTS

The subjects of this study consisted of high school students from each grade level 9-12. Three students were chosen from each grade to participate. It also consisted of teachers and administrators who have only worked in a traditional September to June calendar school. Five teachers who have taught less than fifteen years participated and five who have taught more than fifteen participated. Three administrators were chosen as well for the study. The population test school operates on a traditional calendar.

METHOD

A qualitative instrument in the form of an interview was used to obtain points of view on year-round schooling and reasons for the viewpoints. Permission was obtained for conducting these interviews and collecting the information over a period of four
weeks from the principal at Marietta High School and superintendent of Marietta City Schools. Permission from parents of students under the age of eighteen was collected as well as a consent form signed by each subject who participated in the interview.

Each subject was asked what his or her thoughts were on year-round schooling. The subjects were allowed to speak freely about how they felt and why. The subjects were prompted to provide why he or she felt the way they did when he or she did not offer the information initially.

**INSTRUMENTATION**

Data was collected throughout the interview process using a tape recorder and notepad. The first question asked of each subject was, “How do you feel about year-round schooling?” The participants were able to respond in any manner he or she wanted while the tape recorder and note pad documented the interview. As needed, the researcher prompted the participants to give reasons for his or her opinions. The researcher asked questions until the participants provided benefits, downfalls, and possible perceptions of others for year-round schooling, as well as whether he or she would pick a YRS or a traditional school if given the opportunity to choose.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The data was analyzed to determine any similarities in opinions. The information was compared for those who expressed a positive attitude for year-round schooling and those who expressed a negative perception toward the same. Under each of these categories, reasons for choosing such attitudes were compared.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Marietta High School students, teachers, and administrators toward year-round schooling.

There were twenty-five participants in this study. The only factor that contributed to choosing subjects was whether or not they had attended or worked in a year-round school previously. No individuals who had been in a year-round school were used for this study. Twelve students volunteered to be interviewed, three from each of the four grade levels 9-12. Ten teachers participated in the study, five of which have been teaching for less than fifteen years, and five of which have been teaching for more than fifteen years. Three administrators also participated in the study.

The initial question asked to the subjects was “What do you think about year-round schooling?” The following questions depended upon the answers provided by the subjects. The information obtained from the subjects was the benefits and negative aspects of year-round schooling as well as how they felt others and the community would perceive the idea of changing to a year-round school in Marietta. The final question for all subjects was whether they would choose a traditional school calendar or a year-round school calendar if given the option. A discussion on whether it would be multi-track or single-track or how the days would be laid out did not take place. When necessary, the researcher did use the 45-15 calendar as an example while also informing the subjects that there are many types of year-round calendars.
Of the twelve students, when asked initially if he or she would like a year-round school, four answered yes and eight answered no. Of the ten teachers, four initially said they would like a year-round school, four said no, one said he or she was indifferent, and the other said no for him or herself but yes for the students. Two of the administrators said year-round schooling would be a good idea, and one was indifferent.

Table 1: Initial reactions for type of schooling calendar preferred.

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<td>Administrators</td>
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Table 2: Final responses for type of schooling calendar preferred.

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<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

After the interview and providing information on the different calendar options and benefits for YRS, seven students said they would choose a YRS over a traditional calendar, and five said no. Both the teachers and administrators did not change his or her perception at the end of the interview.
STUDENTS

Of the students who said they would choose a traditional school still, the following were some of the comments toward his or her reasoning:

“I would probably choose this one just because I have been doing it since I was little.” He mentioned that it sounded “ok”, but that he preferred traditional.

“The year-round school sounds like a good idea, but I like the traditional, because I could get a summer job.”

“From an educators point-of-view, the YRS is probably better. As a teenager’s point-of-view, I don’t really like it that much.” He also mentioned the difficulty with getting a job.

“Possibly we wouldn’t forget as much stuff, but I would rather have the summer vacation and forget the stuff I learned than go all year and not forget anything.”

“I would choose traditional. I’m also a senior, so it doesn’t really matter that much.”

The remainder of the students who voted for YRS chose this schedule because it would be a nice change and felt that it would be better for their learning experience.

Benefits

The students, both for and against YRS, provided potential benefits for the year-round calendar. The following is a list of the possible benefits:

1- More intelligence.

2- We wouldn’t forget stuff.

3- People wouldn’t get lazy over the summer.
4- You would learn more and have better grades.

5- It keeps your mind fresh.

6- You could go to college sooner.

7- There would be more people in the workforce, because you could finish earlier.

8- More time for homework and projects.

9- Less dropouts.

10- With breaks more often, you could come back with a new start.

11- Keeps you focused and goal-oriented.

12- Less wasted time.

13- Gets you in a better routine.

**Downfalls**

The following is a list of some of the downfalls the students predicted for year-round schooling.

1- You wouldn’t see your family much.

2- No time for friends and fun.

3- You would get burned out easily.

4- There would be no buffer between years.

5- No summer break.

6- It would be really hot during the summer months with no air conditioning.

7- It would cut into summer jobs for students.

8- Kids would go crazy without a summer.
TEACHERS

The following were the comments of the teachers who chose the traditional calendar over the year-round calendar:

“I don’t think I would choose a YRS, but if they were to institute a YRS, I don’t think I would complain either.” She mentioned liking the traditional summer.

“I prefer traditional, but I would deal with it.” She loves to travel in the summer.

“I like summer to go to our cottage.”

“I am opposed to it. Personally, I have a farm, so that plays a big part in wanting the summers off.” He even went as far as saying, “If we went to a year-round school, I would quit teaching.”

The teacher that was indifferent listed benefits and downfalls, but stated, “I don’t really have a strong feeling either way.”

The teacher who chose both stated, “It is nice to have the summer off. If I would vote on the one to make me more happy, I would vote to have the summer off, but if I’m going to vote the one that will make the students more productive, I would probably choose the YRS.”

The other teachers who said yes to YRS either thought they would like to try something new or truly felt it would be more beneficial for students and teachers. They find the idea intriguing and would like to learn more about the year-round calendars available and how they run.

Benefits

The following are some of the benefits provided by the teachers:

1- More retention of material.
2- More short-term focus.
3- More content cover.
4- More hands-on time.
5- More individual time with students.
6- More motivation.
7- More continuity.
8- More energetic and disposed to learning.
9- Better public perception toward teachers.
10- More flexibility with curricular units.
11- Provides a fresh start for grades.
12- It would give everyone a fresh start.
13- Better testing scores.
14- More time to bond with family.
15- More free time, different times of the year.
16- Less reteaching.
17- More continuity from one class to the next (ex. Algebra to Geometry).
18- More concentrated work.
19- Less loss effort from students.

*Downfalls*

1- It would be too hot during the summer months.
2- It is bad for farmers.
3- Students would get burned out.
4- Students would feel imprisoned.
5- Less summer traveling time.

6- Disrupts the 100-year old system.

7- Community and parents would be resistant to the idea.

8- It would be costly for the school district.

9- Difficulty for parents to find day care or baby-sitters.

10- Vacation spots could become more crowded during the “breaks”.

11- Possible loss of material learned after each break.

ADMINISTRATORS

The administrator who was indifferent mentioned the fact that he is there almost all year anyway, so it wouldn’t really matter to him either way. The other two administrators feel year-round schooling would be a good idea. They would both like to see it implemented but understand the difficulties in getting legislation passed and getting everyone in the community and system to go along with it.

Benefits

The administrators provided the following possible benefits:

1- More time on-task.

2- Better retention.

3- Increased learning and remediation.

4- Increased instructional time.

5- More breaks.

6- Less discipline problems.

7- Clearer objectives for short periods.
**Downfalls**

The following are the potential downfalls provided by the administrators:

1. The idea of change and getting everyone on the same page.
2. Figuring out day care.
3. It’s hot and the school has no air conditioning.
4. Athletic and extra-curricular conflicts.
5. Financial difficulties.

**Potential Perceptions from Others**

The students interviewed felt that other students would be upset about changing the calendar, but that some would soon like it once they tried it. One student mentioned the agricultural factors, and felt that the parents who have farms would be most upset about the situation.

The teachers felt that the parents and community would have mixed feelings about instituting a YRS in Marietta. Some felt they would object due to the negative aspects mentioned previously, but others felt they would oppose simply because it is change, and people like change. Others felt that the community might be concerned at first, but that they would soon see the merits that a YRS can provide for their children and would be open to the idea.

The administrator agreed with the students and teachers that most would not be open to the idea in the beginning, because the traditional calendar and having the summers off has been around for so long and everyone is used to it. They do feel that the
community would need lots of exposure to the idea and would have to see the benefits in the YRS calendar, but would soon appreciate and like the change.
CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to collect the perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators at Marietta High School toward year-round schooling. The data was collected through individual interviews with the subjects. Twelve students participated in the study, three from each of the four grade levels 9-12. Ten teachers, half of which have taught less than fifteen years and half of which have taught more than fifteen years, also participated. Three administrators were interviewed as well for the study.

The researcher believed that students, teachers, and administrators would have a negative perception toward year-round schooling because of a lack of knowledge toward the subject matter. She wanted to prove this theory.

Each participant was initially asked if he or she had taught or attended a year-round school before. The study was limited to those who had not attended or worked in a YRS. Once the interview began, the researcher asked the subjects what his or her thoughts were on YRS. The following questions were dependant upon the individual’s responses. The researcher asked questions until she obtained opinions on the benefits and downfalls of YRS, how they felt others would perceive changing to a YRS, and whether he or she would choose a traditional calendar or a year-round calendar if given the option.

The researcher recorded all interviews, transcribed them, and analyzed them for similarities and differences. The researcher identified how many students, teachers, and administrators initially liked the idea of YRS and how many changed his or her mind by the end of the interview. If the subject was unaware of how year-round schooling worked, the researcher provided information, then asked the subject again whether he or
she would prefer a traditional or YRS. The researcher also identified and listed the prospective benefits and downfalls each set of subjects (students, teachers, administrators) provided.

The researcher concluded that more individuals perceived the idea of YRS in a positive manner than she initially thought they would. Many originally felt year-round schooling was a great idea, and some of the individuals who said it would be a bad idea changed his or her mind by the end of the interview. Some of the subjects who said it was a bad idea in the beginning were not knowledgeable on the construction of year-round schooling, but when given the information, he or she changed his or her mind.

IMPLICATIONS

The researcher felt that there was not enough information available for the community and persons attending or working in Marietta High School on year-round schooling situations and calendars. People sometimes had a negative perception because their initial reaction or thoughts were that you attended school 365 days a year. The researcher felt it would be imperative to provide more information to the residents of Marietta in order for them to form a knowledgeable opinion on YRS. It would be beneficial to have a speaker come in and talk to individuals and provide them with information and possible school calendars that could be used for Marietta High School. It would also be beneficial to have individuals come in who have attended both a traditional school and a year-round school to discuss the benefits of year-round schooling as well as some of the struggles they came across while switching systems and offer suggestions for overcoming the obstacles.
INFLUENCE

The researcher hopes this study will influence the participants of the study to conduct more research on his or her own to discover the benefits and possibilities that year-round schooling can provide for the students and staff as well. It is also her hope that the subjects will begin discussing this possibility with others and begin spreading the word out in the community.

LIMITATIONS

There were no real limitations to this study. If the participants had attended or worked in a year-round school previously, he or she would not have been used for the study. The only limitation was not knowing whether the subjects chose the calendar he or she did because it would be best educationally or whether he or she chose it because it suits his or her vacation needs or wants more appropriately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If this study were conducted again, the researcher feels she would provide copies of year-round calendars for the subjects to look over. She would also take the study further by asking whether the subjects were choosing the best calendar for him or herself or if they were considering what was best for the students and their learning experience. She feels many of the teacher and administrators answered according to what would work best for him or herself, but did not choose the calendar he or she thought would best suit the students and their needs. It would also be interesting to see how students, teachers,
and administrators in the middle school and elementary schools felt about YRS as well. Due to the many misconceptions, it seems apparent that a professional development day would be beneficial. A guest speaker who could shed some light on year-round schooling and provide options for the calendar would be able to open the door for more understanding and opportunities.

CONCLUSION

It is apparent that the current school systems in Marietta, OH and many other districts need to do something to keep up with current times. People are constantly buying new clothing to fit the current styles and new vehicles that match the current trends. Why is it then that society is stuck in the same educational ways of thinking and working? Shouldn’t America be looking at what works best for our children and how we can best suit their needs? Too many students are failing, dropping out, or are just not reaching his or her potential due to burn out. No matter what the change may be, America just needs to accept change and begin working in a positive direction. Year-round schooling may not be the best solution for every district or every type of school, but it is a possibility that needs to be looked at in every district. There is ample evidence indicating the benefits that can be provided from a year-round calendar. It may take some trial and error and a lot of grief to get everyone on board, but are our children not worth it? America is no longer an agrarian society, so why not make the change to a year-round school? It could just be the best thing we could do for our students and our future.
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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for Year-round Schooling

Have you ever worked in or attended a year-round school? (Asked before being chosen as a subject)

How do you feel about year-round schooling?

Why do you feel this way?

What do you know about year-round schooling and how it works?

Why or why not?

What do you think the benefits would be?

What do you think the negative aspects would be?

If given the opportunity to choose between a year-round school or a traditional school, which would you choose?

* The questions asked and order depended on answers and comments from each individual.
APPENDIX B

Dear Dr. Baker:

I am currently working on my master’s thesis at Marietta College. I would like to conduct interviews with Marietta High School students, teachers, and administrators and am requesting your permission. I will be asking the subjects about their opinions toward year-round schooling. I will be requesting parent signatures as well as signatures from each subject. Please choose one of the options below, sign, and return to me at Marietta High School. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Andrea Sutton
Intervention Specialist

____ I give my consent for Andrea Sutton to conduct her research interviews with Marietta High School students, teachers, and administrators.

____ I do not give my consent for Andrea Sutton to conduct her research interviews with Marietta High School students, teachers, and administrators.

________________________
Signature
Dear Administrators:

I am conducting research for my master’s thesis and would like your help. I will be interviewing students, teachers, and administrators to find out his/her opinions on different types of schooling situations and school calendars. The interviews will be recorded but kept confidential. The data will be destroyed within one year after the completion of the study. If you are interested in participating in this study, please fill out the form, sign it, and return it to my mailbox. Thanks for your time and cooperation.

Thank you,

Andrea Sutton

I, _________________________________, give my consent to participate in a research study conducted by Andrea Sutton and have my interview recorded.

______________________________
Signature
Year-round Schooling 34

Andrea Sutton
208 Davis Ave.
Marietta High School
Marietta, OH 45750
740-374-6540

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am conducting research for my master’s thesis. I am interviewing students, teachers, and administrators from Marietta High School to get their opinions on different types of schooling situations and school calendars. I would like to interview your son/daughter and would like your permission. The interviews will be recorded to listen to the data and make records at a later date. The materials will remain confidential and will be destroyed within one year of the study. Please fill out the bottom of this form if you give your permission and have your son/daughter return to me. If you have any further questions, you may contact me at the high school at 740-374-6540. I appreciate your time and cooperation.

Thank you,

Andrea Sutton

I _________________________ give my son/daughter __________________________________ permission to participate in research conducted by Andrea Sutton at Marietta High School.

____________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature

____________________________
Student Signature
APPENDIX C

Dear Andrea,

Your Human Subjects Proposal, assigned HSC #07-024, has been approved.

You may begin data collection at any time. Approval expires on July 6, 2007. Attached is your approval form. If you have further questions or comments, please contact me.

Good luck with your research.

Miranda Collins – HSC committee member

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