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AUHSD Calendar Discussions Move Forward

By Sophie Braccini

Last year crowds protested a proposal for a new academic calendar for the Acalanes Union High School District. The proposal, which had been approved by teachers during collective bargaining, called for a more balanced school year with a first semester ending before winter break and a more uninterrupted teaching block in January.

“Our objective was to reduce student stress by giving them a worry-free winter break and more efficient teaching period in January,” explains Superintendent Jim Negri. The consequences of these options are a school year starting earlier in August and ending sooner in June. Residents protested the move, fearing interference with

other school districts, disrupted family vacations and activities. The district backed-off and appointed a committee of 24 individuals to study the question.

The report that the group presented to the Board on the 19th is an analysis of the consequence of the proposed calendar; it does not offer recommendations. It is as strong at presenting the “pro” as it is strong as showing the “con” of the new proposed calendar.

“People can be very passionate,” recalls committee member Randi Pines, “the group was balanced and courteous, we all got a chance to speak and did our best to explore all aspects of the issue.” The report does not deliver any easy answer but high-

lights important questions such as alignment of the different Districts and summer time cuts.

Now the discussions are going to enter the “under the radar” period when District meets with representatives of the teachers during negotiations that are not public. To continue to weigh on this issue and get their opinion heard, parents can fill up the survey that Negri put on the District web site. More than 2100 residents have filled it already, it will be opened until April 8th and its results will be presented to the Board in April. To enter your opinion go to:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB227K3CQTWHK>