

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD

ACADEMIC SENATE

Academic Calendar – Spring Semester Break

RES 192016

BPC

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of California State University, Bakersfield recommends to the President that henceforth, Spring semester break should occur in alignment with the Kern High School district.

RATIONALE: Students and faculty experience high levels of stress, in part, because of demands from university responsibilities. High levels of stress are particularly true for first-year university students and has been linked to higher dropout rates and lower academic achievement. The Spring semester break has traditionally been used as a respite for students and faculty and been implemented to reduce stress and to recharge. The Spring semester break is often a time shared with family and friends, which may need to include travel, and as such, when the Spring semester break occurs is an important consideration when trying to maximize the opportunity to recharge and for families to enjoy the break. Many of our students and faculty colleagues at California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) have children or younger family members, so not aligning the Spring semester break of CSUB with the Kern High School district (KHSD) would have negative consequences on childcare responsibilities and the ability of friends and family members to enjoy the break together. The mission of CSUB has a regional focus, and it is important that we are meeting the needs of our campus community.

The Budget and Planning committee of the Academic Senate at CSUB commissioned a survey across the campus constituents, asking for input and preferences on the Spring semester break. Student, faculty, staff, and administrator respondents were in favor of having the Spring semester break ($\geq 95\%$). Further, across the 4 cohorts, a majority ($> 50\%$) of each, were in favor of the Spring semester break at CSUB to align with when the KHSD held their break. Comments from respondents in favor of alignment with the KHSD spoke of wanting to be able to spend the break with family and a burden on childcare needs if CSUB did not align with the KHSD. Of student and faculty respondents, a large portion ($> 30\%$), preferred the Spring semester break to occur midsemester (Week 8), commenting on pedagogical concerns over the inconsistent timing of

break year-to-year, and on a State University supporting a religious calendar (see Figure below)

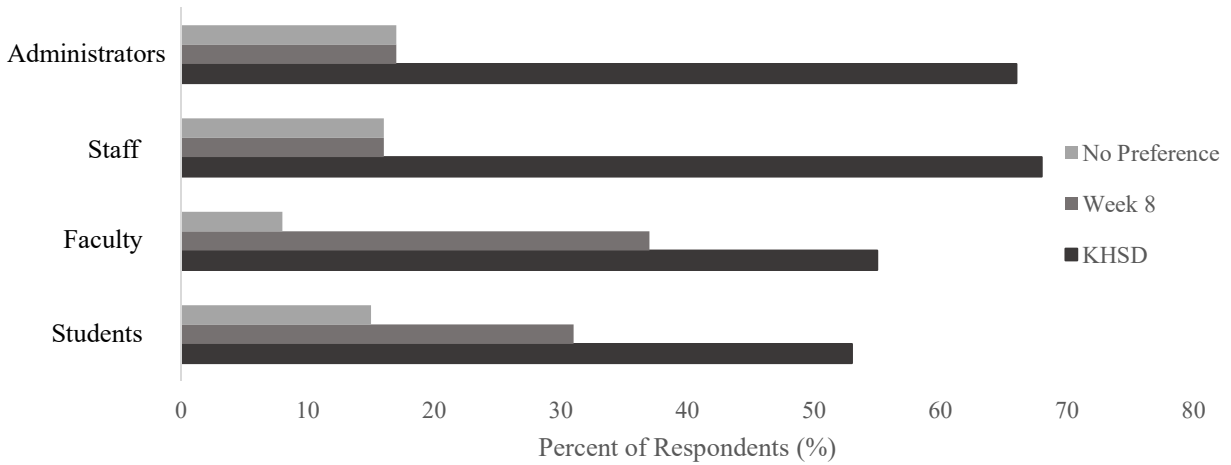


Figure 1. Respondent data on preference of when to have Spring semester break. 17% (2081) of students, 38% (292) of faculty, 40% (246) of staff and 43% (45) of administrators responded to the survey.

Distribution list:

- President
- Provost and AVP Academic Affairs
- AVP Faculty Affairs
- Deans
- Department Chairs
- General Faculty

Approved by the Senate April 23, 2020
 Sent to the President May 1, 2020
 Approved by the President May 8, 2020