

## SHOULD DEPED BRING BACK THE OLD SCHOOL CALENDAR?

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The Department of Education directed the classes to start for the School Year 2023-2024 on August 28, 2023, and continue until June 28 the following year. The new academic calendar has been the talk of the town due to some opinions saying that the old academic calendar should be reinstated. With this issue being discussed within the country it is important to know the factors why the Department of Education choose to implement the new school calendar and its pros and con in comparison to the old school calendar.

The department after careful considerations opened the schools after the pandemic in August 2022 and will end in July of the current year. This has been a major change in the usual Academic Calendar which starts on June and ends in March of the following year.

The delay in the opening of classes gave the schools additional time to recover and prepare for the re-opening of classes by maintain important health and safety protocols and other adjustments.

Climate concerns in the Philippines influenced the decision significantly. From June through October, the country experiences its rainy season, which frequently causes weather-related interruptions such as floods and typhoons. DepEd planned to alleviate the negative effects of these weather conditions on school operations by delaying the start of classes until July. Beginning the academic year when the rainy season is slightly less stable may reduce interruptions in the learning process and promote a more constant and uninterrupted academic year.

However, the new academic calendar has some drawbacks. One challenge is the requirement for learners and teachers to make modifications. Individuals must adjust their schedules and habits due to the change in the academic calendar, which may compromise personal plans or obligations established based on the previous calendar. This transition time may be difficult for both students and teachers as they adjust to the new academic calendar.

Furthermore, the change to a July start date may cause misalignment with other universities that use other academic calendars. This can have an impact on the transition of students from one level to another, as well as the synchronization of academic schedules for those pursuing higher education. Coordination and alignment with other educational institutions may necessitate additional work to ensure that students have a smooth transfer.

There are certain advantages to the old academic calendar, which ran from June to March. For starters, the familiarity and tradition connected with the old calendar offer learners, teachers, and parents with stability and predictability. It allows for continuity in planning and conforms with long-established educational goals and practices.

Furthermore, the previous calendar corresponds to the Philippines dry season. Because there are fewer weather-related disruptions during this period, this can result in a more constant and unbroken school year. Class suspensions due to severe weather are less common for students and teachers, allowing for a more continuous learning experience.

The traditional academic schedule, however, has some drawbacks. One significant disadvantage is its susceptibility to weather-related disturbances. While the calendar corresponds to the dry season, it is not fully immune to unpredictability, such as early-onset typhoons or sudden weather shifts. This can still result in class suspensions and pauses in the learning process, disrupting educational continuity.

Moreover, the traditional schedule allows for only a limited amount of time for rehabilitation and preparation. The time between the end of one academic year in March and the start of the next academic year in June is quite short in schools. This might result in hasty preparations, thereby affecting educational quality and the well-being of students and staff.

Both the old and new academic calendars have its advantages and disadvantages. The department should substantially consider everything because this might affect the delivery of quality education to the learners. Changes are inevitable so there should always be adjustments on the way.

*References:*

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