Q. What are the reasons for changing the instructional calendar?
A. The impetus for the exploration is driven solely by the desire to do what is in the best interest for students. While we want our students to achieve academic success, we also want them to be healthy, happy and well-rounded. For several years, there have been informal conversations among parents, staff and students about changing the calendar to provide students (especially at high school) a winter break free from homework, projects and assignments, as most colleges and universities do. About a year ago, the Board of Education directed District administration to form a Calendar Committee to explore the community’s interests, and the impact of possibly ending the first semester prior to winter break. The committee met several times over a year, gathered input from their respective organizations or communities and studied the results of the surveys to parents and students. From that process, the committee developed the current draft calendar that is now being explored by the District’s employee bargaining units.

Q. Who comprised the Calendar Committee and how were they selected?
A. The calendar committee included representatives from the District, bargaining units, the Board of Education, PTA, our teaching staff, parents, the City of San Ramon and the Town of Danville. Committee members were nominated by the District’s various stakeholder groups.

Q. What questions did the Calendar Committee explore?
A. The Calendar Committee asked the following questions in exploring a change to the instructional calendar:
   1. What is best for SRVUSD students?
   2. What is the impact to community organizations?
   3. What is the impact to the parent community?
   4. What is the impact to our staff?
   5. What are the positives to be considered?
   6. What are the negatives to be considered?
   7. What are the keys that we should consider?
   8. What is the impact to our student population?

Q. Was the District’s intent to move the start of school earlier in August?
A. No, the interest has been focused on providing students with a stress-free winter break.
Q. Is this change part of a state-wide effort?  
A. No, each District considers and adopts its own calendar.

Q. How much earlier will school start under the proposed draft calendar?  
A. School would start one week earlier under the proposal.

Q. Has the District looked at starting after Labor Day, pushing finals into February and ending later in June?  
A. Historically, when we were more of an agrarian society, the school year was from September through June with the summers off, in order to allow students to help on the farms during the summer. Schools across the country have moved away from this traditional calendar for a variety of reasons. In SRVUSD, we have not considered moving the start of the school year back to after Labor Day, largely because a number of students participate in Advanced Placement (AP) in the spring. These are nationally scheduled exams. A later start date would mean that students have less time to prepare before testing takes place.

Q. November and December can be very stressful for students with holiday events and college applications. Has the District considered this in possibly moving first semester finals before the winter break?  
A. The District has considered the impact of moving finals prior to winter break during the holiday season. One point of consideration is that the deadline for applications for the University of California schools is November 30, prior to when finals would occur.

Q. What evidence does the District have that students experience stress over the winter break?  
A. Our information is based upon evidentiary feedback from our counselors, teachers, parents and students. It is also based upon a marked increase in the number of mental health interventions that are required during finals for our high school students. We also know that even if students do not have homework or projects over the winter break, they experience the stress of knowing that have to return to finals once school resumes in January.
Q. What else is the District doing to deal with student stress?
A. SRVUSD has a long-standing reputation for caring for the “whole-child” which includes finding balance in their lives. High performing districts often see elevated stress on students, especially at the high school level. SRVUSD is concerned about this stress and we are taking a multi-pronged approach to addressing the issue. This issue does not affect our high school students exclusively. Students at all grade levels are impacted. While we fully acknowledge that a calendar adjustment alone cannot solve the issue of student stress, we believe that a combined effort can have an impact on overall student health and wellness. A possible calendar change combined with a revision to the homework policy, increased counseling at all grade levels, parent education, student awareness and staff development are just some of the things that are within the District’s control that we can adjust to address the issue of student stress. We are looking at all of them.

Q. Is there research to suggest that ending the first semester prior to winter break has a positive impact on student stress?
A. There’s been a lot written about American teens experiencing increased stress. In talking about strategies to address teen stress, schools are often encouraged to look at multiple approaches including examining testing, homework and finals. Denise Pope, Maureen Brown and Sarah Miles specifically speak to the benefits of ending the first semester before the winter break in their book, “Overloaded and Underprepared: Strategies for Stronger Schools and Healthy, Successful Kids.” The authors cite that most universities and colleges “found that students need a real break in between semesters, so they shifted their yearly calendar to have first semester end before break.”

Q. I’ve heard that the District wants to change the instructional calendar because it will bring in more money. Is that true?
A. Absolutely not. The change in the calendar does not impact the District’s finances.

Q. Does the proposal shorten the summer vacation for students?
A. Should the proposed draft instructional calendar be implemented, the first transition year from the current instructional calendar to a new calendar would shorten the summer by 1 week (summer 2016). After that first year, the summer break would be the same length of time.
Q. Will the change affect the number of instructional days?
A. No. SRVUSD currently has 180 instructional days and would continue to have 180 instructional days under the proposed draft calendar.

Q. Why did the District move away from having spring break align with the Easter holiday?
A. The interest has been in Spring Break falling in the middle of the semester so that students get a break about halfway through. The Easter holiday shifts which sometimes means that students may not get a break until almost two-thirds of the way into the semester.

Q. Is the District still considering shortening the Thanksgiving break in order to provide two days off in October for an earlier break instead of the week off at Thanksgiving?
A. No. After receiving much feedback, it was decided that the preference is to have the entire week off at Thanksgiving.

Q. What will be the process for changing the calendar?
A. Under the Educational Employment Relations Act, the calendar must be bargained with all three of the District’s labor groups as it has an impact on “hours of employment, terms and conditions of employment.” At this stage in the process, the District must be careful in its communications around the calendar so as not to appear to be “negotiating away from the table.” Once the bargaining units come to an agreement with the District regarding a proposed calendar, the calendar can be shared with the community prior to being taken to the Board of Education for consideration.
Q. August is one of the hottest months of the year. Has the District considered the additional costs associated with starting school one week earlier in August?

A. The historical temperature data demonstrates that the temperatures in June and August in the San Ramon area do not vary greatly. Therefore, the District does not believe that there will be a significant impact on air conditioning related costs by moving the start of the school year up by one week. See chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Temp. (min)</th>
<th>Temp. (max)</th>
<th>Temp. (avg)</th>
<th>Precipitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>20°F</td>
<td>73°F</td>
<td>46°F</td>
<td>2.7”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>27°F</td>
<td>75°F</td>
<td>50°F</td>
<td>2.8”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>32°F</td>
<td>82°F</td>
<td>52°F</td>
<td>2.6”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>34°F</td>
<td>94°F</td>
<td>55°F</td>
<td>1.0”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>37°F</td>
<td>102°F</td>
<td>62°F</td>
<td>0.4”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>44°F</td>
<td>109°F</td>
<td>66°F</td>
<td>0.0”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>49°F</td>
<td>111°F</td>
<td>71°F</td>
<td>0.0”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>50°F</td>
<td>106°F</td>
<td>70°F</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>42°F</td>
<td>103°F</td>
<td>67°F</td>
<td>0.1”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>38°F</td>
<td>94°F</td>
<td>61°F</td>
<td>1.0”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>27°F</td>
<td>81°F</td>
<td>54°F</td>
<td>0.9”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>24°F</td>
<td>70°F</td>
<td>47°F</td>
<td>2.0”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest average temperature in San Ramon is July at 71.1 degrees. The coldest average temperature in San Ramon is January at 46.2 degrees. The most monthly precipitation in San Ramon occurs in February with 2.8 inches. The San Ramon weather information is based on the average of the previous 3-7 years of data.

Q. What has the District done to communicate that it is considering changing the calendar?

A. The exploration of the instructional calendar has been widely publicized. Information about it has appeared in school newsletters, PTAs newsletters, principal's messages, homeowners groups postings throughout the valley, Facebook postings, Patch articles, Danville Express articles, Inside Your Schools (Jan., Feb., and March issues), and other sources. The District conducted two surveys, including one for students. In addition, it appeared on the Board of Education agenda on May 12, 2015 which was posted in advance of the Board Meeting on the SRVUSD website.
Q. What were the results of the surveys?
A. The District conducted two surveys – 2,853 students took the survey for middle and high school students and 5,802 people took the survey for parents, staff, students and community members. Both surveys demonstrated support for moving the first semester to end before the winter break. To view the survey results, please visit the results posted on the SRVUSD website.

Q. Will the change have an impact on athletics in the community?
A. The District invited a number of athletic groups that use our facilities and have a large program in the San Ramon Valley to a meeting or to send their feedback. The groups that attended or sent feedback shared that the change would not have a great impact on their programs.

Q. What will the impact be on the summer camp that my child attends?
A. SRVUSD has worked with both the City of San Ramon and the Town of Danville as well as checked with some of the more popular camps in the area. The District has been assured that they will adjust their calendars to align with a change to the SRVUSD schedule.

Q. Will moving the start of the year up by one week impact fall athletic programs?
A. Fall practice dates are determined by the California Interscholastic Federation. They typically start the 2nd Friday in August.