



## Summary of Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) finds insufficient evidence to determine whether year-round schooling improves academic achievement—an established determinant of long-term health.

### What is Year-Round Schooling?

Year-round schooling alters the school calendar by more evenly distributing school and vacation days throughout the year without changing the number of school days per year. There are two approaches:

- Single-track — All students participate in the same school calendar, which replaces a longer summer break with shorter breaks throughout the year. Intersession programs may be offered between regular school sessions and may be used for remedial or accelerated course work. This approach is used to avoid summer loss and achievement gaps.
- Multi-track — Students are grouped into “tracks” that take breaks distributed throughout the year at different times. One track is always on break while the others are in session. This approach is used to address school crowding.



### Systematic Review Findings

Studies included in the systematic review did not provide enough evidence to determine if year-round schooling works. A CPSTF insufficient evidence finding means additional research is needed; it does NOT mean the intervention does not work.

- Single-track — evidence was insufficient because the role of intersession programs was unclear.
- Multi-track — evidence was insufficient to determine effectiveness, and researchers expressed concern about whether students were fairly assigned to tracks with the same access to resources.

### Evidence Gaps

Additional research and evaluation are needed to answer the following questions.

- Is there an ideal spacing of school days and breaks for the purposes of learning, and does that match a particular calendar design?
- Are single-track calendars effective without programs between school sessions?
- How is track placement in multi-track calendars achieved and how can equity be assured?

### Facts about Health Equity and Schools

- Health disparities are related to inequities in education. Individuals with less education are more likely to experience health risks such as obesity, substance abuse, and injury.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Programs that are designed to improve academic performance are increasingly recognized as public health interventions.<sup>3,4</sup>

### Learn More

#### Summary of Evidence and CPSTF Finding and Full-text Publications

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/health-equity-year-round-schooling>

#### The Community Guide, Understanding CPSTF Findings

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/task-force/understanding-task-force-findings-and-recommendations>

**CDC, Adolescent and School Health,  
Health Disparities**  
[www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities)

**Healthy People 2020, Educational and  
Community-Based Programs**  
[www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/  
educational-and-community-based-programs](http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/educational-and-community-based-programs)

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Health Disparities. Adolescent and School Health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010 Objectives: Educational and Community Based Programs; 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Freudenberg N, Ruglis J. [Reframing school dropout as a public health issue](#). Preventing Chronic Disease 2007;4(4):A107.

<sup>4</sup> Muenning P, Woolf SH. Health and economic benefits of reducing the number of students per classroom in US primary schools. American Journal of Public Health 2007;97:2020–2027.

Established in 1996 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) is an independent, nonfederal panel of public health and prevention experts whose members are appointed by the director of CDC. The CPSTF provides information for a wide range of decision makers on programs, services, and other interventions aimed at improving population health. Although CDC provides administrative, scientific, and technical support for the CPSTF, the recommendations developed are those of the CPSTF and do not undergo review or approval by CDC. Find more information at [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org).