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## Daley sees year-round school in city's future

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October 11, 2005

**BY ASSOCIATED PRESS**

It's only a matter of time before Chicago's public schools switch to a year-round schedule, Mayor Richard Daley said Tuesday.

Daley did not have a time table for the plan, but he said American schools need to do more to prepare students to enter the work force and college.

"The idea, still having two months off, is ridiculous in this country," Daley said. "If you're going to compete with India and China, they're going to school six days a week and they don't take the summer off."

Money is the biggest hurdle to extending the year for the nation's third-largest school district, Daley said at the dedication of the new Little Village High School campus on the city's southwest side.

"We're spending \$16 billion for the NASA program, why can't we spend money for summer programs for every child here in this country?" Daley said.

Schools could use the summer to conduct a "camp" that combines recreation and education programs, Daley said.

A group of Hispanic lawmakers plan to introduce a bill to extend the school year for the entire state, said state Sen. Martin Sandoval, D-Cicero.

Officials would have to hammer out the details of a year-round plan with the teachers' union, said Michael Scott, president of the Chicago Board of Education.

"Time on task is a part of our union negotiations and working with the union to make sure that they appreciate the fact that if you want to be a better car driver, you have to drive more," Scott said. "In order for us to get better and better at reading and better at math you have to do it more often."

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## Daley pushes year-round school

October 12, 2005

BY [FRAN SPIELMAN](#) AND [KATE N. GROSSMAN](#) Staff Reporters

Mayor Daley on Tuesday beat the drum more loudly than he ever has for an idea he has championed for more than a decade: year-round school.

Daley said it's "ridiculous" for Chicago Public School students to continue to take two months off in the summer when their competition for jobs in a global economy -- students in China and India -- are in school far longer.

"Not in America. We have to send our children during the summer to the farm. I don't know where it is. But that's the old idea. We're still in the old idea of taking two months off. ...If we want to compete against China and India, we have to change," Daley said.

### 176 days is minimum

School is in session 180 days in Chicago. That compares to 250 days in parts of China, 225 days in India, 210 days in Australia over 42 weeks and about 200 days in parts of Europe.

Illinois requires a minimum of 176 days, just below the 180-day average for most states. No U.S. school districts have significantly extended their school year, say officials with Education Commission of the States and the National Association for Year-Round Education.

### 90,000 in summer school

Individual schools, including charters and private ones, offer some exceptions. In Chicago, about one-third of the public charter schools start in August, before traditional CPS schools open. Two other Chicago public schools that are part of the national Knowledge is Power Program have mandatory summer sessions and meet on Saturdays.

Chicago school officials noted that more than 90,000 Chicago students were in academic summer school programs.

One type of year-round schooling growing nationally is to truncate summer vacation but offer longer breaks at other parts of the year. Instead, Daley wants to extend the total number of school days. Students would go through a traditional school year, with summers reserved for a combination of work and play.

He says a summerlong vacation interrupts a smooth education and leaves kids with too much idle time, a contention some research supports, particularly for disadvantaged students.

"Wealthy people send their kids to camp... so why can't we do camp within our elementary and high schools? Make it enjoyable, but also make it educational for them as well," the mayor said.

Daley knows what stands in the way: money. When asked if the financially strapped school system could afford to

pay its teachers more money for more work, School Board President Michael Scott didn't miss a beat.

"Not right now we can't," he said.

### **Raise number of days**

Chicago Teachers Union officials said they support year-round schooling, but say teachers would have to be paid more. An extended or changed calendar would have to be written into the union contract.

State Sen. Martin Sandoval (D-Cicero) plans to propose a bill next year to begin gradually raising the minimum number of school days required in Illinois.

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