

## Watauga Schools Start August 19th

Written by Gary Childers  
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Watauga Schools testing coordinator, Dr. Wayne Eberle, told the Watauga Board of Education last night what they already knew--that they're boxed in on the issue of school calendars. With that issue finalized, the board approved the 2013-2014 school calendar containing the start date for students of August 19th. Dr. Eberle reported that forty Boards of Education had submitted requests to the state legislature for approval of alternate calendars better fitting their school systems needs but none had been approved. Questions about the late start date raised areas of concern with some Board members since the later start date causes the first semester to end a week after the Christmas break. The concerns were based on the potential of negatively impacting testing at the end of the first semester and possibly keeping some early graduates from being able to start college in the spring semester. There were also concerns expressed about the combination of the later start date and a bad winter causing the schools to have to be in session later into the summer. However, even with these concerns, the Board had no choice but to approve the calendar that fit within the parameters outlined by the state legislature. The approved 2013-2014 calendar will be available immediately on the Watauga County Schools web site.