



1 **HB 1075 – Student Extracurricular Activities held on Teacher/Admin professional**  
2 **development days. NDCEL Testimony in support with potential amendment.**

3 **2/10/21**

4 Good afternoon Chairman Schaible and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name  
5 is Dr. Aimee Copas and I am here today representing NDCEL which serves all educational leaders  
6 in schools with the exception of school boards and teachers.

7 Today we are discussing the Fall Convention for Teachers and Administrators. I’m here today to  
8 provide you with some historical context as well as valuable data that both supports the bill and  
9 that may support a suggested amendment to assure the opportunity to develop our school leaders  
10 and instructional staff each year.

11 These two days have been held as no-school days for nearly 50 years. For many decades, there  
12 were two separate conferences – one held for teachers, one for administrators, however both  
13 were always held on the same two days of the year (the third Thursday and Friday in October).  
14 Over time the state has transitioned between whether the time spent in PD would be required,  
15 paid for or not, etc. It seems that from a “requirement” standpoint that the past decade has been  
16 handled well in that there is no-school that day to provide the opportunity, but schools were not  
17 required to pay their teachers to attend. In more recent years, NDUnited discontinued hosting  
18 the conference. For many years, the week before the conference week, NDDPI would host what  
19 was called the Title I conference. Upon the discontinuation of the NDUnited Teacher  
20 Conference, NDDPI expanded their offering to make it more relevant to more teachers. For the  
21 past 6+ years, the field of teachers and administrators continually asked for NDCEL to work with  
22 NDDPI to merge the two conferences and have them both held on the two days of no-school as  
23 the substitute teacher issue that existed to have teachers attend the NDDPI Educator conference  
24 the week before as well as expenses was a burden to districts.

25

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26 As a response to the field, NDCEL did just that and requested that NDDPI partner. NDDPI was  
27 gracious in working with NDCEL and handed over the conference to them as conference  
28 planning was a large burden on their staff as well. Hence, in 2020, NDCEL hosted the first ever  
29 Fall Conference for *All Educators* – targeted at all instructional staff from Para-Educators to  
30 Superintendents and all staff in-between. All educational parties interested were invited to help  
31 design the conference to provide an assurance of quality for all attendees – a design team of well  
32 over 30 people helped design the conference. Albeit that it was an odd year and a bit of a  
33 challenge since it needed to be remote due to COVID, it was hugely successful with over 3000  
34 registrants. Over ½ of those attended for free. Live attendees over the two days of no-school  
35 were up to 1000 people and others have been continually utilizing content and are able to do so  
36 through April. Many districts registered their entire instructional staff. To date we can account  
37 for over 25,000 hours of training that our educators have participated in.

38  
39 Now let’s talk about the future. In 2021 NDCEL has the Bismarck Event Center contracted to  
40 bring us back together live and in person once again. There will be incredibly valuable and  
41 dynamic professional development and networking opportunities that only happen at the Fall  
42 Conference. We anticipate recorded *breakout sessions* to be available **after** the conference for  
43 expanded PD offerings for districts as it provides an ongoing opportunity for educators to self-  
44 direct their growth. Keynotes will **NOT** be recorded however based on their contract  
45 requirements and *may* be livestreamed (if allowed by speaker) on the two days of the conference  
46 for those attendees that may wish to attend remotely and have access to the training for the entire  
47 year. This option provides districts huge PD flexibility later in the year and the ability to tailor  
48 their development all year long while saving dollars.

49  
50 The chief complaint that I’ve received over the years, and that NDHSAA has also heard is that  
51 there should be flexibility to host extracurricular activities on Friday afternoon after the  
52 conclusion of the conference – that was the crux of the original bill offered by Rep. Dockter.  
53 Further-more just before Christmas the decision was made by the state superintendent to NOT  
54 declare those two days held by school districts as non-school days. My phone and email has

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55 been non-stop with schools that are concerned about this decision. This prompted my office to  
56 conduct a survey just prior to the bill being offered in the house, the intent being find out what  
57 the desires of our schools are. In a 9-question survey with over 300 respondents, we asked about  
58 the participants school size, their position in the school, and based on a research driven Likert  
59 scale the degree to which they found the Fall Conference days useful, whether there should be  
60 extra-curriculars held on Friday, the challenges posed by not holding those days as no-school  
61 days statewide, whether or not the respondent attends the fall conference, and whether their  
62 school calendar plans have changed. Finally, we asked whether we should partner with  
63 NDHSAA, and other partners such as our legislators to ensure these two days are held as no-  
64 school days moving forward.

65

66 The only way our administrators and teachers can attend in a significant way (especially in  
67 smaller districts) is if there is not school. Not having the days held greatly disadvantages our  
68 school principals - especially those from our smaller communities. In 2015, when legislators  
69 questioned the value of the 2 days held, the law was amended to reflect its current verbiage.  
70 However, the educational leaders are asking now for a stronger assurance that this will not  
71 potentially adjust each year.

72

73 This brings me to our requested amendment. Based on the survey data, the districts are  
74 indicating that having this anchored in law would be beneficial. With my husband and I both  
75 being in education I have exposure to large numbers of teachers as well. Each and every teacher  
76 I talked to wanted these days to be held as non-instructional days and to be able to locally decide  
77 how to use them. This would also alleviate NDDPI the annual burden of having to spend the  
78 time doing the applications, declaring the day, and doing press releases annually regarding the  
79 declaration of the days.

80

81 We'd humbly request the consideration of the following amendment which includes the intent of  
82 Rep. Docktor's language and request and goes further to have the ND Legislature hold the days  
83 moving forward that have been historically for this purpose:

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84 **15.1-06-04.1. School district calendar - Limitation.**

85 1. ~~A school district may not schedule school-sponsored, school-directed, or school-related~~  
86 ~~activities, including instructional time, during any day that the superintendent of public~~  
87 ~~instruction declares is in conflict with a professional development conference directed toward all~~  
88 ~~teachers or all administrators and hosted by an educational organization in this state~~

89 ~~2. The declaration permitted by subsection 1 is limited to two days during a school year.~~

90 Strike the whole area of code and replace with this:

91 15.1-06-4.1

92 A school district shall not schedule student instructional time during the third

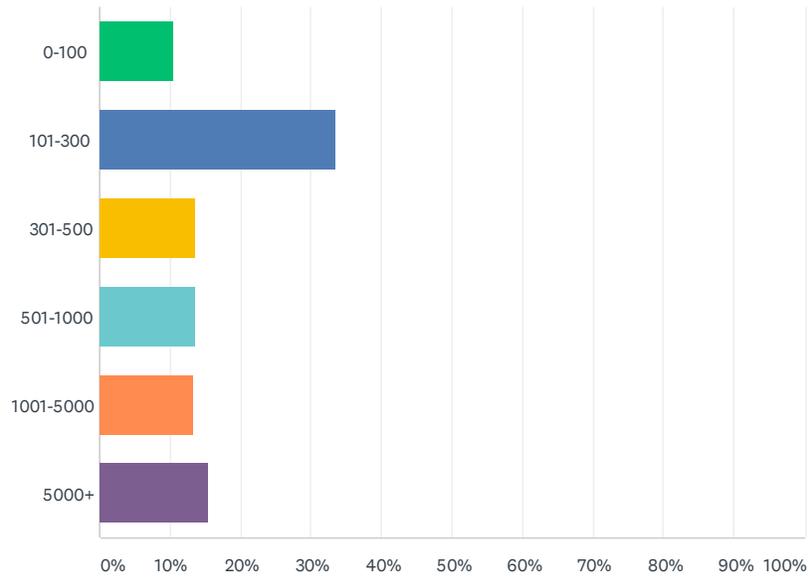
93 Thursday and Friday of October. These two days are held for elective professional

94 development conferences for teachers or administrators at the state, regional, or local

95 level.

### Q1 Please share your district size based on school enrollment

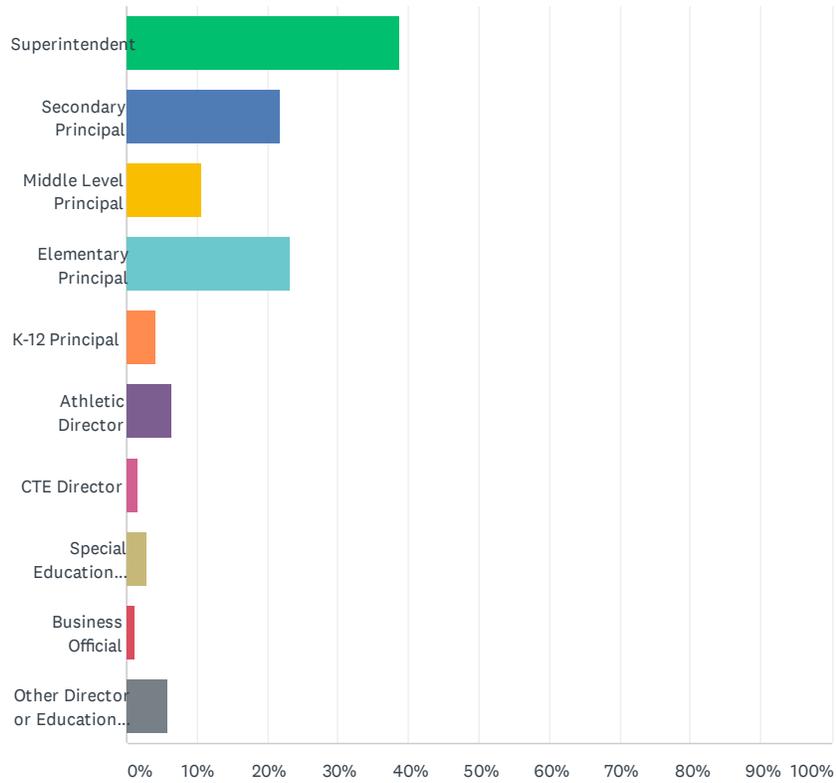
Answered: 308 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-100	10.39%	32
101-300	33.44%	103
301-500	13.64%	42
501-1000	13.64%	42
1001-5000	13.31%	41
5000+	15.58%	48
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>308</b>

Q2 Please share your position within your school district. (Select all that apply to you to account for those of you with multiple roles)

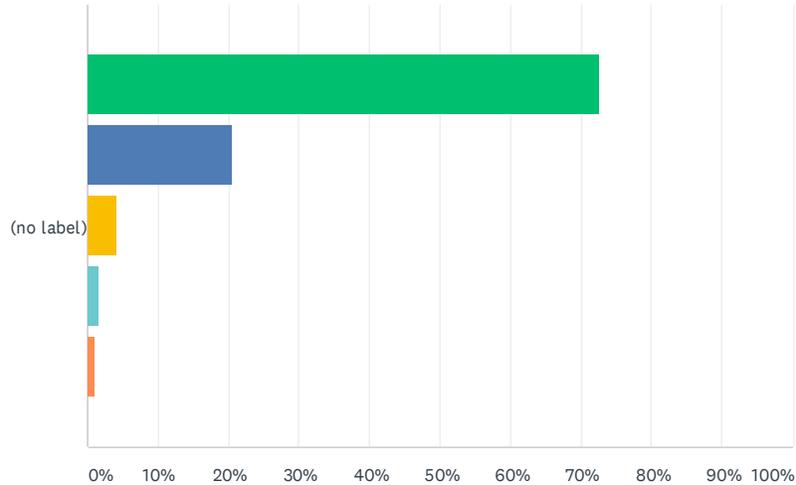
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Superintendent	38.76%	119
Secondary Principal	21.82%	67
Middle Level Principal	10.75%	33
Elementary Principal	23.13%	71
K-12 Principal	4.23%	13
Athletic Director	6.51%	20
CTE Director	1.63%	5
Special Education Director	2.93%	9
Business Official	1.30%	4
Other Director or Educational Leader	5.86%	18
Total Respondents: 307		

Q3 Please share your belief regarding the usefulness in keeping of the 2 days in the fall for the professional development conference held as no-school days to provide the opportunity for all teachers, instructional staff, directors and administrators from all districts regardless of size can attend.

Answered: 307 Skipped: 1

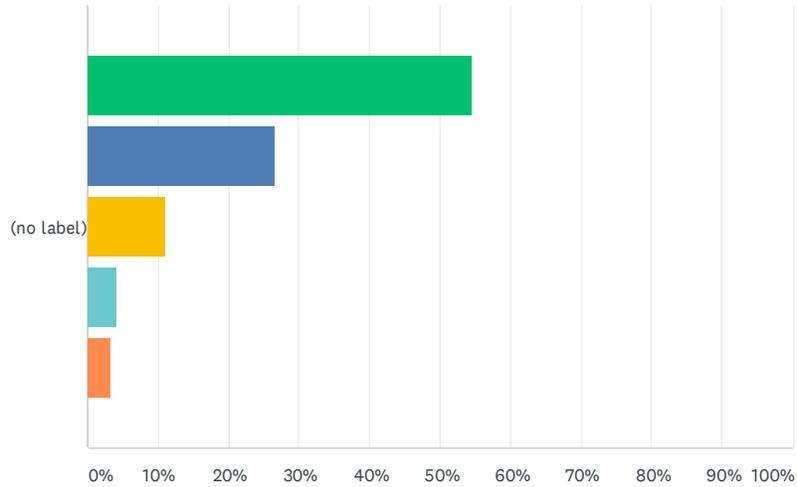


- Strongly Agree - the 2 days are useful for the conference/PD
- Agree - the 2 days are useful for the conference/PD
- Neither agree or disagree that the 2 days are useful for the conference/PD
- Disagree that the 2 days are useful for the conference/PD
- Strongly Disagree that the 2 days are useful for the conference/PD

	STRONGLY AGREE - THE 2 DAYS ARE USEFUL FOR THE CONFERENCE/PD	AGREE - THE 2 DAYS ARE USEFUL FOR THE CONFERENCE/PD	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE THAT THE 2 DAYS ARE USEFUL FOR THE CONFERENCE/PD	DISAGREE THAT THE 2 DAYS ARE USEFUL FOR THE CONFERENCE/PD	STRONGLY DISAGREE THAT THE 2 DAYS ARE USEFUL FOR THE CONFERENCE/PD	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	72.64% 223	20.52% 63	4.23% 13	1.63% 5	0.98% 3	307	1.38

Q4 Please share your belief regarding the usefulness of KEEPING the 2 days for the PD Conference for all administrators and all instructional staff AND provide the option to have Friday evening extracurricular activities.

Answered: 304 Skipped: 4

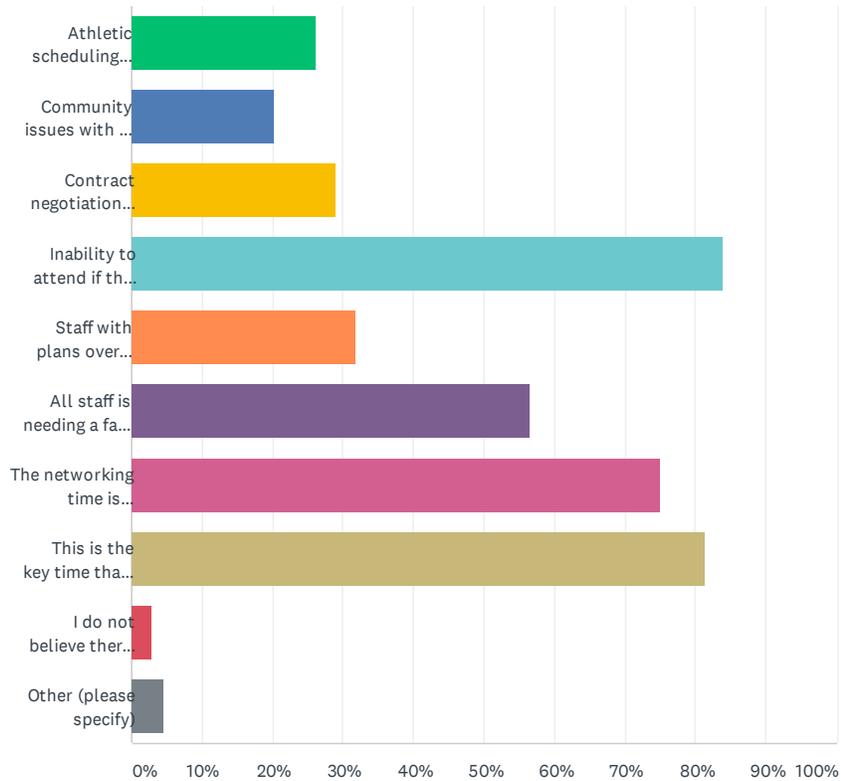


- Strongly Agree to hold the days but allow the option to have Friday evening extracurriculars.
- Agree to hold the days but allow the option to have Friday evening extracurriculars.
- Neither agree or disagree regarding extracurricular activities.
- Disagree to hold the days but allow the option to have Friday evening extracurriculars.
- Strongly Disagree to hold the days but allow the option to have Friday evening extracurriculars.

	<b>STRONGLY AGREE TO HOLD THE DAYS BUT ALLOW THE OPTION TO HAVE FRIDAY EVENING EXTRACURRICULARS.</b>	<b>AGREE TO HOLD THE DAYS BUT ALLOW THE OPTION TO HAVE FRIDAY EVENING EXTRACURRICULARS.</b>	<b>NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE REGARDING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.</b>	<b>DISAGREE TO HOLD THE DAYS BUT ALLOW THE OPTION TO HAVE FRIDAY EVENING EXTRACURRICULARS.</b>	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE TO HOLD THE DAYS BUT ALLOW THE OPTION TO HAVE FRIDAY EVENING EXTRACURRICULARS.</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
(no label)	54.61% 166	26.64% 81	11.18% 34	4.28% 13	3.29% 10	304

### Q5 Please share challenges if the days are NOT held by law as no-school days (select all that apply)

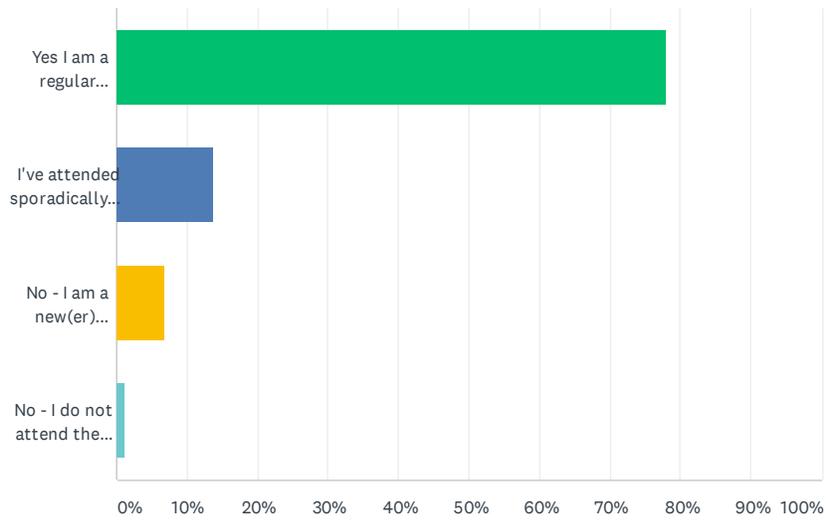
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Athletic scheduling issues	26.14%	80
Community issues with the days on the calendar	20.26%	62
Contract negotiation issues	29.08%	89
Inability to attend if there is school as admin and teachers struggle to be out of the building.	83.99%	257
Staff with plans over these days	31.70%	97
All staff is needing a fall break by this time (doing it as a state helps alleviate issues with scheduling, parents, and other conflicts)	56.54%	173
The networking time is critical - the loss of this is damaging to the profession.	75.16%	230
This is the key time that leaders in the state can be trained - having school as an option makes it difficult to attend.	81.37%	249
I do not believe there are challenges	2.94%	9
Other (please specify)	4.58%	14
Total Respondents: 306		

### Q6 Please share whether you have attended a NDCEL Fall Conference in the past.

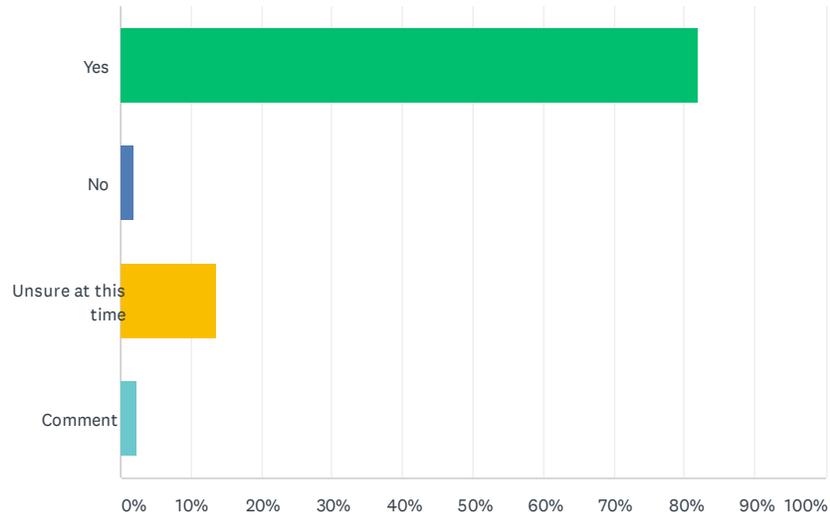
Answered: 305 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes I am a regular attendee	78.03%	238
I've attended sporadically in the past	13.77%	42
No - I am a new(er) administrator (or new(er) to North Dakota	6.89%	21
No - I do not attend the NDCEL Fall Conference	1.31%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>305</b>

### Q7 I plan to attend the NDCEL Fall Conference in Bismarck on October 21-22, 2021

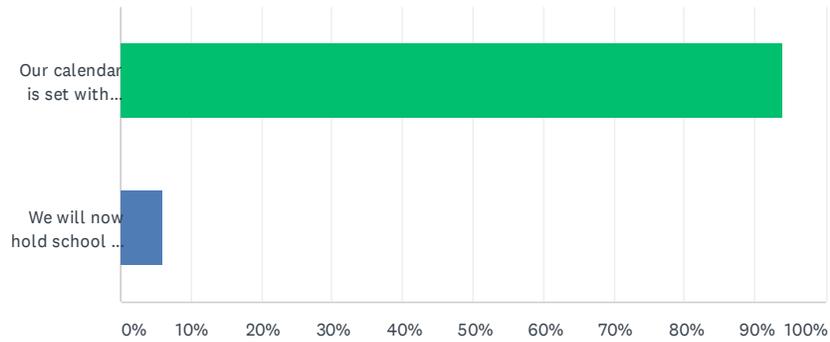
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.08%	252
No	1.95%	6
Unsure at this time	13.68%	42
Comment	2.28%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>307</b>

### Q8 Please share your district calendar plans for 2021

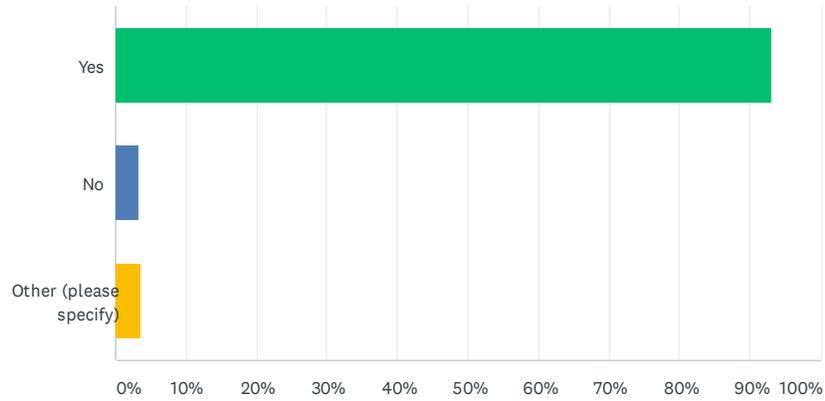
Answered: 276 Skipped: 32



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Our calendar is set with October 21-22, 2021 as no-school days.	93.84%	259
We will now hold school on October 21-22, 2021	6.16%	17
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>276</b>

Q9 I believe NDCEL should work with NDHSAA and other partners to ensure that these days are held as no-school days in the future.

Answered: 307 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	93.16%	286
No	3.26%	10
Other (please specify)	3.58%	11
TOTAL		307