

## "Save Our Indiana Summers"

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Michigan students are still enjoying their summer vacation while many in Indiana are already hitting the books.

When the Casetti's checked to see when their children would be heading back to Northpoint Elementary they were shocked to see it was August 13th.

"Our children are really missing out on summer time. We believe that's important family time," says Alfredo Casetti.

They say the early start dates cut into family visits they can only plan during the limited span of warm weather in northern Indiana.

"In order for us to plan time to get together for the families you want the good weather, so that all their cousins when they're here to visit can be outside enjoying each others company," says Jennifer Casetti.

They're part of a movement of parents, teachers and community members across the state who want to "Save Indiana Summers."

They'd like school to start after Labor Day, but the P.H.M superintendent says that's not an easy thing to do.

"It's more complex you know than changing the start date," says Dr. Jerry Thacker.

When the school year begins is part of teacher's contracts.

The teacher's association and administrators negotiate the start date.

It's then approved by the Board of Trustees.

"When we start thinking about the regular school day plus we think about the academic competition, the extra-curricular competition whether it's academic or athletic we have some agreements with lots of different school systems," says Thacker.

However, he can see financial benefits to area schools if they pushed back the start of school.

"Typically August is warmer, we use more air conditioning in August than we probably do in June."

Thacker is considering surveying parents of P.H.M students to get their opinion.

He says if P.H.M parents were overwhelmingly in favor of a later date he would push for it, but it would be difficult if nearby school districts still began in August.

State Representative Ryan Dvorak polled his constituents in the area earlier this year and found out of 1600 people, 2 to 1 were in favor of starting after Labor Day.