

Customizing the EDM Pacing Calendar: One Coach's Story

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When I first became math coach in my school three and a half years ago, I tried to create organizers that teachers could use to help structure the EDM program for them and make it easier for them to just go in and teach. I asked myself how I would best like to have information presented to me and decided a one-page calendar would work.

Because the CAB is a generic pacing calendar, some months don't exactly match with actual teaching days available on the real calendar. The teachers also felt the CAB was too crowded at the beginning of the year when they were trying to establish routines, and too empty at the end of the year. I went to my school administration and math RISs and asked if we could manipulate the dates a little because of the feedback from the teachers. They said it was fine with them as long as we were finishing the program by the end of the school year.

The CAB has great information and I wanted to see that information attached to real dates with holidays, PD days, teacher conference days, testing days, etc., figured in. So I fit as much as I could from the CAB on the calendars. I also knew how overwhelming EDM can seem to a new teacher beginning a new program, so I read through each unit at each grade level and put suggestions in the margins for such things as portfolio pieces, advance preparation needed, etc. I chose Microsoft Publisher's calendars because they can be manipulated easily so that a lot of information can fit on each day, and the information can be cut and pasted each year into a new calendar. (I was part of the Tablet PC pilot program and asked them to include Publisher on the tablets, too!).

For the first year, I factored in 3-4 days a month that teachers could use to catch up, stretch, etc. During the year, teachers of specific grade levels gave feedback on certain things they would like

added to their grade's calendar. Suggestions included dismantling the monthly calendar and providing a unit review day before each unit test in first grade. I kept those things in mind and added them the next year. An EDM consultant brought in by the region said that making Fridays game days or catch-up days had worked in her school in Texas. The teachers and administration in my school wanted to try that. So I reworked the calendars the following year in that format. The calendar, however, is suggested. Teachers are not required to make Friday game day; they can stretch where they see fit.

Once the Department of Education releases the next year's school calendar, I sit down and make one blank set with all the holidays and game days filled in. As the more specific calendars are released (providing dates for testing and parent teacher conferences), I add those dates. I speak with the teachers at each grade level to see how many Test Sophistication Days they would like to be included. I count how many days per month are left for EDM lessons, and make sure we finish a few days before the end of the school year as a precaution to allow for teacher sick days, conferences, etc. I create a chart by grade level before I do the actual cutting and pasting to make sure I am on target. Then I cut and paste from the previous year's calendar.

I've made sure to call it "Leslie's calendar" with new teachers, explaining I created it imagining it as one tool I would want if I were a classroom teacher. They know the CAB is the "real calendar."

The exact pacing of this calendar is not required in our school and I really think that is why people really love it. They know how many days they can "play with" and still get the program done. This flexibility gives them freedom while keeping them on track.

My goal for next year is to include the New York State Performance Indicators, and to number the school days. Feel free to use and/or change these calendars to suit the needs of your school.