

Counting down to the last day of school, as students do it

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20120620-01

June 20, 2012



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Today is the last day of school in Seattle public school. My friend the seventh-grade teacher told me that students count down to the last day of school in a rather unusual way. Some people might count the number of calendar days until the end of school. For example, if there are 35 days between today and the last day of school, we say that it's 35 days until the end of school. Others might count only the number of school days before school is out. If today is Monday, and the last day of school is Friday, then there are five days of school remaining. But students, or at least seventh-grade students, count the days differently. First of all, you don't count today. Because today has already started, so you may as well treat it as already over. Next, you don't count the last day of school itself, because nobody gets anything done on the last day anyway, it's basically just one big party. Also, if there are any half-days or days with early dismissal, don't count those either, because days where you aren't there the whole day don't count, because the class periods are so short you don't get anything done. Similarly, days with special events like a field trip don't count. Furthermore, you don't count Mondays, because on Monday, you're still fresh off the weekend and you won't be concentrating on school anyway. Conversely, you don't count Fridays, because you've already mentally checked out.

The result of all these calculations is that the students will cheerfully calculate that there are only 25 days of school left, when it's still only late April.

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