

School Start Time Committee
Council Chambers
May 22, 2017
10:00 a.m.

Present:	J. Erardi	K. Joyce
	E. Aho	M. Ku
	A. Colangelo (absent)	M. Memoli
	D. Cruson	D. Roach
	J. Davila	L. Rodrigue
	R. Dufour	J. Vouros
	T. Einhorn	H. Werner
	J. Fonovic	2 Public
	T. Harrison	

Dr. Erardi began the meeting speaking about Option #5. The only change in tier 1 is that the high school and middle school start times are 40 minutes later. Tier 2 has additional ride time in the morning for the elementary schools because all buses drop students off at Reed first. The Reed ride time is about the same as this year but the elementary students will have an extended ride from Reed to their school. At dismissal, there will be some elementary buses at Reed to pick up students and then travel to the appropriate elementary schools. At that time, approximately two-thirds of the students will transfer to the bus they were on in the morning so they will have additional ride time in the afternoon. The elementary run will be about the same length as it is today.

Mrs. Joyce asked what would happen if a parents has to pick up their child early.
Dr. Erardi would discuss that with the leadership team.

Mr. Harrison asked what the dismissal procedure was at Reed.
Mrs. Fonovic said that all teachers have duties in the front and back of the school so there is ample coverage.

Mrs. Evans Davila spoke about the results of the parent survey. (see attached)
Mrs. Ku said the number one consideration is the impact of chronic sleep deprivation followed by parent work schedules, daylight hours at the bus stop, cost neutrality, and the possibility of longer ride times.

Dr. Rodrigue said parents seem to understand why we did this and why sleep deprivation is a concern.

Mrs. Evans Davila said before the June 6 meeting we need to explain circadian rhythms. Also there was disbelief that students wouldn't do anything with a change in sleep time. We know that's not the case. We have to look at homework and the sports games issue with students staying late to see another game.

Dr. Erardi asked what talking points we should be sharing.
Mrs. Evans Davila said one is we can't put the middle and high school students to bed earlier.
Mrs. Ku said that the research is definitive. With a later school start time they do get more sleep.

Mr. Vouros said we need to get across that it's not so much what time they go to bed but how much more they are sleeping in the morning. Morning is when REM sleep and dreaming occurs.

Dr. Erardi stated that there needs to be a conversation with the Board about which year the change will be made.

Mr. Vouros said that the survey indicates to start it now.

Mr. Cruson said the Board will decide when it begins.

Dr. Erardi said there will be questions around the EdAdvance Program and concerns for the next two years. There will be questions around students standing in the dark and around the high school staff and partial day programs. He would connect with Dr. Rodrigue.

Dr. Erardi met with the union presidents and shared Option 5. He feels we are in good shape with the unions with this plan. He has had two meetings with St. Rose leadership which included Sister Colleen, Pam Arsenault, Monsignor Bob, and a member of their parent leadership team. They are sharing results of the survey with parents and staff and will talk with them this week. There will be no change for the other private schools. We will send it out the Wednesday before the meeting. He wants the subcommittees to play out their part of the presentation for research, student voice and transportation. The three Board members will have final thoughts. There should be three to five slides from each group and they should be sent to me, Joanne Morris and Meg Reilly.

Mr. Vouros asked how we would work with St. Rose School regarding their time change.

Dr. Erardi was going to have this committee speak to their parent community to be sure they have the information they need. 35% of their student enrollment is non-Newtown residents with their ridership just over 100 students.

Dr. Rodrigue said that when she spoke to Wilton about their change in start times she asked for any data regarding what happened after they made the change. They had no data to share so she thought it might be important for us to think about having this type of data if we make changes.

Dr. Erardi said the conversation in both meetings with St. Rose was around the parking lot. There is a concern about space in the lot if the start time is moved to 8:40 because there is a daily mass at 9:00 a.m. and their growing preschool has a number of cars dropping off students. We are looking to see how this change would affect parking. They are also anxious to survey their parents. Another concern is that there are 1,000 public school children in afterschool CCD classes.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

Submitted by: Kathy June

SCHOOL START TIME PARENT SURVEY – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Question 1: “What do you think is important for the Board of Education to consider as it moves forward with the discussion on school start time? Please rate each item listed below to indicate level of importance.”

Item Type: Multiple Choice with 4-point Likert Scale

Number of Responses: 1083 of 1084 participants opted to respond

QUESTION 1 - SUMMARY ANALYSIS

- A. Impact of chronic sleep deprivation on teens (depression, obesity, mood, risk-taking behaviors, etc.)**
Very Important: 65.5% (n = 707)
- B. Before-school child care**
Not Important: 30.5% (n = 329)
- C. After-school child care**
Not Important: 28.4% (n = 305)
Important: 25.8% (n = 277)
Somewhat Important: 25.5% (n = 274)
- D. Older sibling availability to provide child care**
Not Important: 39.6% (n = 427)
- E. Change in school-sponsored after-school sports schedule**
Somewhat Important: 31.5% (n = 341)
Important: 30.7% (n = 332)
- F. Change in school-sponsored after-school activities (drama, music, clubs, etc.)**
Somewhat Important: 32.9% (n = 357)
Important: 30.9% (n = 335)
- G. Access to non-school-sponsored after-school activities (private dance lessons, sports, etc.)**
Somewhat Important: 32.7% (n = 353)
- H. Parent/guardian work schedule**
Very Important: 31.6% (n = 340)
- I. Daylight hours for transportation (bus pick-up or drop-off in dark)**
Important: 29.1% (n = 314)
Somewhat Important: 27.7% (n = 299)
Very Important: 26.1% (n = 282)
- J. Impact on Educational Center for the Arts (ECA) and Regional Center for the Arts (RCA) inter-district programs**
Somewhat Important: 38.5% (n = 411)
Not Important – 38.3% (n = 409)
- K. Impact on students’ ability to work part-time**
Somewhat Important: 40.3% (n = 434)
- L. Additional 10-20 minutes in morning bus ride length for elementary schools**
Somewhat Important: 29.8% (n = 322)
Very Important: 26.3% (n = 284)
- M. Keeping the plan cost-neutral (no increase in transportation spending by District)**
Somewhat Important: 31.9% (n = 344)
Important: 26.7% (n = 288)
- N. Having 1 year’s notice before change occurs**
Not Important: 46.7% (n = 505)

Question 2 (Free Response Item): "Is there another issue of importance you want the Board of Education to consider? If so, please use this space (50 characters maximum)* to identify this item."

Item Type: Free Response with Unlimited Characters

Number of Responses: 287 of 1083 participants opted to respond

***Note: Survey did not suppress length of answer; therefore, responses were unlimited length.**

QUESTION 2 – CODING OF COMMON THEMES

OVERALL OPINION:

Yes, change times (Y): n = 138

Neutral or mixed opinion (NE): n = 63

No, don't change times (NO): n = 57

Change times now (N): n = 23

Wait to change times (W): n = 2

TRANSPORTATION/BUSING CONCERNS:

Additional bus ride length (RL): n = 34

Darkness at bus stops (D): n = 13

Mixed ages of students on bus (A): n = 5

Keep costs neutral (\$): n = 4

Shuttles impacting safety (SH): n = 2

GENERAL CONCERNS:

Student health should take precedence (H): n = 98

Parents must control bedtime; this is not a school issue (P): n = 29

Homework load is impacting sleep (HM): n = 28

Impact on working parents (WP): n = 19

Child care burden on families (CC): n = 15

Impact on after-school activities and sports (AC): n = 12

Must maintain reasonable dismissal time (RDT): n = 11

Proposed 8:00 a.m. time change not late enough (L): n = 2

Teachers should be surveyed (T): n = 2

Newtown's Parent/Guardian Survey Results

