

Anchorage School District School Start Times – Research and Potential Changes



Shannon L. Bingham
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Introduction

- In 2014, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that U.S. middle and high schools start at or after 8:30.
- Research indicated that early school start times restrict the sleep opportunity of adolescents, and healthy school start times are associated with increased sleep duration, decreased daytime sleepiness, increased attendance and graduation rates, fewer tardies and increased GPA, improved health outcomes, and fewer automobile crashes.
- Since 2014, many districts have explored changing start times with a significant number of those making changes.
- Additional research, both pro and con, has been published
- Opposition research tends to suggest benefits for middle and high school students with later starts are minimal and emphasizes potential negative effects on elementary school students of earlier starts.



Why are we considering a change?

- National research on optimized school start times suggest that middle and high school students should not start school until after 8:30 a.m.
- Research suggests elementary students rise early and tire by mid-afternoon—an earlier start could be beneficial
- University research and hospital studies indicate improvements in middle and high school student performance and wellness given later start times
- A significant Rand Corporation study indicates that high school student safety could improve dramatically with later start times

Why Consider Change?



Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Research indicates later HS and MS start times contribute to student wellness	Elementary students walking in early morning darkness
Later starts = recommended sleep time	HS students with after school jobs
Less tardiness and negative behaviors	Sports and extracurricular activities.
Fewer traffic accidents / safety (Rand)	Changes in staff work schedules
Improved school / family “atmosphere”	After school childcare scheduling
Less depression, school day fatigue, tobacco, junk food use	Older students who need to be available to provide childcare to younger siblings
Improved student performance / attendance - especially first period	Military parent schedules that allow quality time in the morning
Earlier ES start times are beneficial given early-afternoon fatigue challenges	Additional change in the wake of the Pandemic
Some studies indicate sleep, wellness and mental health improvements for parents and teachers	Complex, weather-impacted bus routes - Changing 45 minute time between routes could be expensive



Potential School Start Time Changes - Chronology

- Summer 2016 – Board listed topic as desired project (during Board retreat)
- Summer 2017 – Request to explore issue (during Board retreat)
- Fall 2017 – February 2018 – Internal analysis and stakeholder process development
- March 2018 – Focus group meetings – Options 1, 2 & 3
- April 2018 – Open house meetings, Chamber of Commerce meeting
- May 2018 Adjusted scenario development, Hayes Research survey – Compromise options with limited impacts and less research-supported benefit were developed – Option A was favored in survey
- Sept 2018 – Final recommendation (Option B) was not adopted:
 - High School 8:00 a.m. 2:30 p.m.
 - Elementary School 8:45 a.m. 3:15 p.m.
 - Middle School 9:30 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- January 2023 – BOE request to revisit issue post Pandemic





Current	Start	End
High	7:30	2:00
Middle	8:15	2:45
Elementary	9:00	3:30

Scenario 1	Start	End
Elementary	7:30	2:00
Middle	8:15	2:45
High	9:00	3:30

😊
Research
Compliant

Scenario 2	Start	End
Elementary	7:45	2:15
Middle	8:30	3:00
High	9:15	3:45



Scenario 3	Start	End
Elementary	7:45	2:15
High	8:30	3:00
Middle	9:15	3:45



	Pros	Cons
Current	Elementary start is convenient for military PT schedule	Elementary school starts after typical morning start times for parents
	Allows high school students to provide childcare	Mid afternoon release for elementary
	Allows lots of after school time for activities	Not research-compliant
	Consistent with elementary school safety perceptions	
Scenario 1	More research-compliant	Elementary start is not convenient for military PT schedule
	High school students and families advocating for change	Least time for high school activities
	Most advantageous for high school sleep	Risk of middle school "latch key" issues
	No change for middle school	More challenging mid-winter issues for elementary school
		Earlier mid-afternoon release for elementary school
		High school students providing childcare or working
Scenario 2	Most research-compliant	Elementary start is not convenient for military PT schedule
	High school students and families advocating for change	Least time for high school activities
	Most advantageous for high school sleep	Risk of middle school "latch key" issues
	No change for middle school	More challenging mid-winter issues for elementary school
	Slightly later than scenario 1	Earlier mid-afternoon release for elementary school
		High school students providing childcare or working
Scenario 3	Most research-compliant	Elementary start is not convenient for military PT schedule
	High school students and families advocating for change	Least time for middle school activities
	Facilitates middle school morning study hall	More challenging mid-winter issues for elementary school
	Potential to address middle school performance	Earlier mid-afternoon release for elementary school
		High school students providing childcare or working



Current	Start	End
High	7:30	2:00
Middle	8:15	2:45
Elementary	9:00	3:30

Scenario 4 - 2018 Recommendation	Start	End
High	8:00	2:30
Elementary	8:45	3:15
Middle	9:30	4:00



Scenario 5 - Research Compliant Order Starting at 8:00	Start	End
Elementary	8:00	2:30
High	8:45	3:15
Middle	9:30	4:00



CaSTLES – Changing Start Times Longitudinal Effects Study

- Recently, ASD heard a presentation by Dr. Lisa Meltzer, a well-regarded sleep researcher with a National reputation. This is one of the best pre / post change studies.
- Dr. Meltzer and her team conducted pre and post change research in a school district that changed start times in Colorado.
- Cherry Creek School District (CCSD - Colorado) began a two-year process of considering the benefits and challenges of changing school start times.
- The BOE voted to implement new school start times for the 2017-2018 academic year. Elementary schools moved from 9:00 am to 8:00 am, middle schools moved from 7:50-8:10 am to 8:50 am, and high schools moved from 7:10 am to 8:20 am.
- Most expected benefits resulted including student performance benefits along with benefits for teachers and parents (more sleep, other wellness improvements).



CaSTLES Outcomes

	Elementary	Middle	High
Additional Minutes of Sleep Per Night	-1 minute	+29	+45
Percentage Change of Students Getting Sufficient Sleep Post Change	-1.8 %	+20.5 %	+32.3 %

Depression / Wellness Behavior / Per 1000 Students Interviewed Pre/Post Change	Elementary	Middle	High
Sad	4	-6	-44
Nervous	-3	-15	-69
Worried	3	-28	-91
Tired	24	-83	-187
Sleepy	20	-59	-207



CaSTLES Outcomes (Continued)

Indicator	Middle School	High School
Ready for School – 1 st Period	+8%	+13%
Alert 1 st Period	+7%	+17%
Prepared 1 st Period	+8%	+16%
Participated 1 st Period	+4%	+11%

Indicator	Middle School	High School
Athletics	-8%	-2%
Activities	-3%	-1%
Employment	N/A	+7%
1 st Period Grades	+1.6%	+3.3%



Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Monday

- PLCs are a means to support major ASD initiatives
 - College, Career, Life Ready
 - Curriculum implementation and goal monitoring
 - Social, emotional learning and student mental health services
- A nationally recognized model of job-embedded professional development for staff
 - Provides time for professional educators to develop and refine instructional strategies
 - Addresses various student needs (i.e. attendance, achievement, etc.)
 - Prioritizes data-driven decision making to improve student outcomes
- Districtwide at all levels in Fall 2024
 - Continue in comprehensive ASD High Schools (since 2006)
 - Adjust Middle School PLC model
 - Implementation at Elementary Schools and Alternative Programs next year
- 60 minute student late start on Monday mornings





PLC Adjustment - Monday

Current	PLC Monday Start	End
High	8:30	2:00
Middle	9:15	2:45
Elementary	10:00	3:30

Scenario 1	PLC Monday Start	End
Elementary	8:30	2:00
Middle	9:15	2:45
High	10:00	3:30

Scenario 2	PLC Monday Start	End
Elementary	8:45	2:15
Middle	9:30	3:00
High	10:15	3:45

Scenario 3	PLC Monday Start	End
Elementary	8:45	2:15
High	9:30	3:00
Middle	10:15	3:45



PLC Adjustment - Monday

Current	PLC Monday Start	End
High	8:30	2:00
Middle	9:15	2:45
Elementary	10:00	3:30

Scenario 4 - 2018 Recommendation	PLC Monday Start	End
High	9:00	2:30
Elementary	9:45	3:15
Middle	10:30	4:00

Scenario 5 - Research Compliant Order Starting at 8:00	PLC Monday Start	End
Elementary	9:00	2:30
High	9:45	3:15
Middle	10:30	4:00

Compromise Scenarios – PLC Adjustment

Questions, Comments, Discussion and Survey

English

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ASD23>



Spanish: <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/23esASD>



Korean: <https://ko.surveymonkey.com/r/23koASD>



Tagalog: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/23taASD>



Survey

English

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ASD23>

