

School Board Meeting:

November 23, 2015

Subject:

School Start Times

Presenter:

Pam Miller

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Recommend board approval to change the BHM school start and dismissal times beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. Recommend the following start and dismissal times:

BHM Elementary Schools	7:45 a.m. - 2:25 p.m.
Buffalo Community Middle School	8:50 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.
Buffalo High School	8:50 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.

DESCRIPTION:

The BHM School Start Times Task Force recommendations were presented to the BHM School Board in January 2015. The recommendations were based on multiple research studies of adolescents, their sleep cycles and the positive effects for students in schools where later start times have been implemented for secondary students. Recommendations presented at that time are listed below.

SCHOOL START TIMES TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the research review and the information on the school start times topic discussed, it is the recommendation of the School Start Times Task Force to:

- change the BHM school start and dismissal times
- consider the start time for secondary sites to be a preferred start time of 8:30 a.m., thus capturing the full potential benefits reflective of the research findings, yet allowing for afterschool and evening activities to come to completion at acceptable times
- consider the start times for elementary schools to be a preferred start time of 7:45 a.m. to alleviate the need for bus pickups any earlier than necessary, yet explore the advantages of staggered start times across elementary sites to reduce loss of academic learning time for shuttled students to district choice programs outside of neighborhood schools
- examine the possibility and expense of three-tiered start times, with the high school start time as the latest of the three
- hold informational meetings for parent and community members to become informed of the issue prior to a decision made by the school board

- utilize a variety of communication methods and strategies to engage all stakeholders in becoming informed on the topic
- convene an administrative subcommittee to begin making plans and decisions regarding the specific start and end times for each site, along with decisions regarding all subsequent implications due to a change (i.e. KidKare, food service, employee work schedules, etc.)
- for a target implementation date of the 2015-2016 school year, take action on the revised start and dismissal times no later than the April board meeting

The school board received these recommendations and were supportive of convening an administrative subcommittee to determine details of a potential change in start and dismissal times.

The administrative subcommittee created an implementation timeline of tasks and people responsible to make those decisions. The implementation plan details were then brought before the full administrative team for additional input and adjustments. Administrators met with the bus company to review options, and determine several start and dismissal time scenarios for elementary, middle school, and high school. The best option was selected after several meetings to research transportation details.

During the staff workshop days prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year, Drs. Wahlstrom and Iber were invited to present their research findings to the BHM staff. Following that presentation, Dr. Thielman and Pam Miller scheduled optional staff meetings at each district site to further discuss the topic with employees and answer questions they may have had.

Four parent informational meetings were held in October in the communities of Buffalo, Hanover, and Montrose. A Frequently Asked Questions handout and a Facts About Sleep handout were distributed to all in attendance, and were also posted on the district website. District administrators also responded to parent and community members through email and phone calls, and spoke with small groups.

If the changes in start and dismissal times are approved for implementation at the start of the 2016-2017 school year, district administration will continue the next implementation steps needed to prepare for the change.