

FAQ - Start Times Next School Year

As of 3/5/19

Q: What factors led to WWS's decision to change start times for the school day?

A: WWS has been looking at school day start times for several years. If you've been to a Coffee Talk, a PTO leadership meeting, a WWS School Board meeting, a Key Communicators meeting - or taken past calendar surveys - hopefully you've participated in the conversation. There were several factors that entered into the decision:

There is a vast amount of research supporting the idea of moving start times for older students to later in the morning, which coincides with a teen natural circadian schedule. [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#)

Harvard sleep study -

<http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/science/variations/changes-in-sleep-with-age>

Earlier start times mean these students are then required to function and learn during their lowest level of alertness in the day.

Evidence is so overwhelming that the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [American Sleep Association \(ASA\)](#), and the [American Medical Association \(AMA\)](#) have all released statements encouraging districts to make the transition to later start times.¹ Research indicates that greater sleep results in improved concentration, less absenteeism and tardiness, and increased traffic safety.

From Parenting magazine: "the [National Sleep Foundation](#) says kids older than 12 need between 8 and 10 hours per night, a [sleep survey](#) found almost half of kids that age get less than 8 hours. We also know how much adequate sleep benefits kids' overall well-being and chances of achieving academic success. And the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) has urged schools to adopt a later start time of after 8:30 a.m. to encourage teens to get enough sleep."

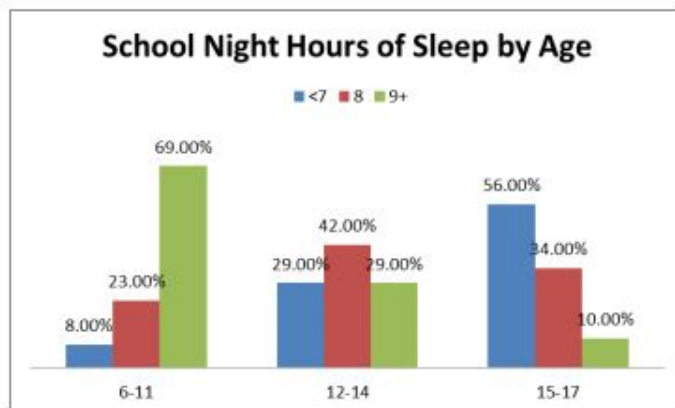


Figure 1: School Night Hours of Sleep by Age Group. While 69% of kids age 6-11 get approximately enough sleep, just 1 in 10 15-17 year olds are. Source: National Sleep Foundation, 2014..

¹ <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/early-school-start-times-bad-for-kids-health#1>

Q: What are the new start times for WWS?

A: 2019-20 START TIMES

Elementary	7:50-2:30	+8 minutes instructional time daily
WIS/WMS	8:45-3:35	+1 minute instructional time daily
WHS	8:35-3:45	+19 minutes instructional time daily

Q: What are the benefits of the adjusted schedule?

A: Other districts locally and across the country who have adjusted their school schedules have reported:

- Student academic gains
- Increased class attentiveness in the morning--fewer tired students
- Decreased tardiness
- Decreased rates of adolescent depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, obesity, automobile accidents, risk-taking behavior, drug and/or alcohol use.
- Fewer disciplinary referrals
- A decrease in student mischief during after-school hours when parents are not home
- Parents indicating students are more pleasant at home

Q: How does an earlier school day affect elementary students?

A: Elementary students generally wake earlier in the morning and are more alert and ready to learn in the morning hours. We realize this is not the case for all families. In addition, the new schedule allows more time for core academic blocks to happen during optimal learning time (8a - 1:30 p) for this age group.

Q: Will we still have a delayed start time on Wednesday mornings for professional learning?

A: Yes, grades K-12 would continue with a half-hour delayed start on Wednesday mornings.

Q: Why is the start time for WIS and WMS start after WHS?

A: The instructional day for high school students is longer than students in intermediate and middle school so an earlier start time for WHS is necessary.

Q: Will the adjusted school day schedule cost the district more money?

A: No. Since working hours and bus times will be shifted but not increased, no additional costs are expected.

Q: Why can't all schools start and end at the same time? Why can't the school day be changed for just the middle and high schools?

A: Because our buses service both elementary and secondary school routes, we would need approximately 60-70 additional bus drivers in order to have the same start and end times for all schools. The district cannot financially support those additional resources.

Q: Why does the district need so much time between the secondary and elementary bus routes?

A: The WWS Transportation Department routing system is a complex operation and the timeframe we have set between elementary and secondary routes is the minimum amount of time required to manage this process.

Q: The change means my elementary student will be home before my high school student and my family could be in need of childcare.

A: We realize that this change will be an adjustment for families, but we feel it is necessary to make the change given the vast amount of scientific data supporting the idea of later school start times for older students and earlier start times for younger students. WWS provides an excellent Before and After Care program for families in need of childcare. We will continue to explore the logistics and possibility of an activity bus for after-school activities.

Q: It is dark at the bus stops in the mornings. How will this affect my elementary student?

A: Unfortunately it is dark for some portions of the year regardless of school start time. As always, parents with concerns can stay with students at the bus stop or drop them off at school.

Q: There are high school students who attend J. Everett Light and Ivy Tech classes during the day. How will this impact them?

A: Right now, Ivy Tech class time is 12:15-2:15. We have two classes offered (Informatics & Cybersecurity-currently 15 WHS students enrolled). These classes are shared with Hamilton Southeastern. We will work with HSE to determine the class time for 2019-20 since our students are the only two districts involved with the classes.

We currently have 43 students enrolled in courses at the J. Everett Light Career Center. (Each trimester varies with enrollment.) JEL will work with WHS to meet the instructional needs of the students attending, and WHS will work with student schedules to maximize instructional time supporting students on their pathways to graduation.

Q: My child participates in school-sponsored clubs and/or athletics. Will they meet or have practice before school? And how will it impact athletic game schedule?

A: Our intent with this change is to ensure students are well-rested for the day. Teams that are currently practicing in the mornings may continue before-school practice, although the time will change to reflect the later high school and middle school start times. Any teams wishing to

make a change to morning practice would need to go through an approval process for a change from afternoon/evening to morning with substantial reasoning.

Many districts have already adjusted start-end times, and we continue to work with them on scheduling.

Our goal is to ensure students are connected within our WWS community and have an opportunity to participate in a variety of clubs and organizations. Students at WIS/WMS/WHS will be able to enhance their educational experience by participating in after school clubs and organizations and there may be two options for transportation: (1) Activity bus-running a late route with community stops (2) Parent pick up with student supervision.

Q: My high school student works with BAC at one of the elementary schools. How will this change impact them?

A: Student workers will be able to work at BAC through the WHS co-op program. Additionally, students can work on delayed start Wednesday mornings.

Q: How will the changes in the school day affect WWS Before and After Care?

A: BAC hours will remain open from 6:45am to 6:00pm every day. If need be, we will expand our program to meet the needs of our families.

Q: How will the change in start times affect traffic flow at WIS-WMS-WHS?

A: The change in start times will allow for staggered traffic flow throughout the main campus at the beginning and end of the school day. The later start times on the main campus will also alleviate congestion on State Rd 32 in Westfield during morning rush hour.

Q: What are the concerns/opposition with later start times?

A: Parents are concerned with later start times due to personal reasons (financial, schedule changes, having to engage in before or after care, as examples) and concern regarding fitting in after-school activities. We know chronic sleep deprivation can impact concentration, eating habits, and ability to cope with stress. We have been unable to identify any non-anecdotal, research-based reasons as to why start times should remain unchanged.

Q: What are the start times for our neighboring districts?

School Day		Instructional Time
Start Time	End Time	

High School

Avon	8:00	2:50	6 hrs 50 mins
Brownsburg	7:50	2:50	7 hrs
Carmel	7:50	3:05	7 hrs 15 mins
Heights	7:30	2:45	7 hrs 15 mins
HSE/Fishers	7:35	2:55	7 hrs 20 mins
Noblesville	8:40	3:40	7 hrs - <i>effective 8/2019</i>
Sheridan	8:00	2:55	6 hrs 55 mins
Zionsville	8:30	3:40	7 hrs 10 mins

**Intermediate/
Middle School**

Avon (7-8)	7:45	2:35	6 hrs 50 mins
Avon Int (5-6)	9:10	4:00	6 hrs 50 min
Brownsburg (6-8)	7:35	2:35	7 hrs
Carmel (6-8)	7:45	3:05	7 hrs 20 mins
Heights (6-8)	7:36	2:40	7 hrs 4 mins
HSE (7-8)	7:35	2:45	7 hrs 10 mins
HSE Int (5-6)	7:45	2:53	7 hrs 8 min
Noblesville (6-8)	8:40	3:40	7 hrs - <i>effective 8/2019</i>
Sheridan (6-8)	8:00	2:55	6 hrs 55 mins

Zionsville (5-8)	8:30	3:40	7 hrs 10 min
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Elementary

Avon	9:05	3:40	6 hrs 35 mins
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Brownsburg	8:45	3:40	6 hrs 55 mins
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Carmel	8:05	2:35	6 hrs 30 mins
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Heights	8:45	3:30	6 hrs 35 mins
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HSE	8:55	3:40	6 hrs 45 mins
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Noblesville	7:50	2:35	6 hrs 45 mins - <i>effective 8/2019</i>
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Sheridan	8:00	2:43	6 hrs 43 mins
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Zionsville	7:50	2:40	6 hrs 30 mins
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